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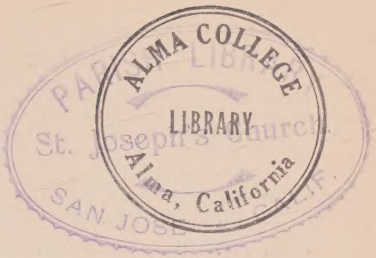

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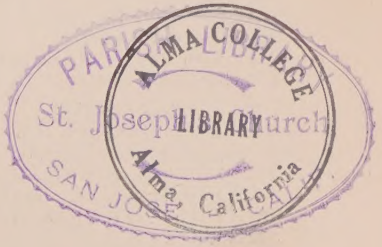

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BISHOP MILNER

(1752—1826)

By the Rev. EDWIN H. BURTON.

The history of the life of Bishop Milner is the history of the struggle for Catholic Emancipation. It is this fact, perhaps, rather than his own personality, striking though that was, which has caused him to fill a larger place in the history of the Catholic Church in England than any bishop since the days of the Reformation.

Yet he was in himself a remarkable man. The work of his life was to guide the Church in this country through a most difficult and dangerous crisis. This work he accomplished, in spite of misunderstanding and opposition from friends as well as foes, with all the insight into the needs and dangers of his age that marks the born leader of men. Possessed of all the instincts of a scholar, as his historical and controversial works show, he was yet a man of action, full of resource, strong in word and deed. Beneath the surface of his stormy career lay a deep spiritual life, which, formed in a school of solid though unpretentious piety, moulded his natural impetuosity of temperament into a zeal for the interests of God which no persecution could daunt.

To understand the part he played during the days when he was, as Cardinal Newman has said, "the

champion of God's ark in an evil time," we must briefly recall the events that preceded his public career.[1]

At the time of Milner's birth, and for more than a quarter of a century afterwards, the Penal Statutes against Catholics were still the law of the land. Some of the more sanguinary provisions had not been put in force for nearly a century; but the main enactments still affected the daily civil and domestic life of Catholics in a galling and intolerable manner. During the eighty years that followed, Catholics were to pass from persecution to emancipation; but the transition was a gradual one. The first attack on the penal system was in 1778, when an Act of Parliament was passed which permitted Catholics to inherit land, and which repealed the law subjecting bishops, priests, and Catholics who kept schools, to perpetual imprisonment. This Act, though it granted but slight relief, struck the first blow at the penal system itself, and thus prepared the way for its total abolition. Significant of the change was the attempt soon made by some of the more prominent Catholic noblemen and gentlemen to combine to free themselves from the more harassing restrictions that remained. During the times of persecution, any concerted action on the part of English Catholics had been impossible; but no sooner had Catholic laymen begun to act together than a spirit of reaction set in, and they endeavoured to exceed their province by dealing with matters purely ecclesiastical and therefore belonging to the jurisdiction of the Vicars-Apostolic. But this tendency was not perceived for some time after 1778; and meanwhile the bishops were inclined to welcome the co-operation and combination of the laity for the interests of the Church.

The origin of this new movement was in a small committee, which had done excellent work in connection with the Act of 1778, but which had ceased to exist when its object was attained. Nevertheless the success it met

[1] For an account of these times, of which barely the outline can be indicated in these pages, the reader is referred to Father Amherst's invaluable *History of Catholic Emancipation.*

with probably suggested the appointment of a more permanent body; for in 1782, a meeting of English Catholics elected a Committee of Five for five years "to promote and attend to the affairs of the Roman Catholic body in England." The secretary of this Committee was Charles Butler—a man in many respects remarkable. Although one of the leading conveyancers of his time, he was precluded from being called to the Bar, owing to his being a Catholic. During a long life of eighty-two years he deserved well of English Catholics in many ways; but the unhappy line of action he pursued in connection with the Catholic Committee has cast a shadow over his fame which even his sacrifice of a brilliant professional career for the sake of his Faith has not been able to remove. The Committee of Five did little besides addressing a letter to the Vicars-Apostolic, urging them to obtain from the Holy See the re-establishment in England of a regular hierarchy, instead of government by bishops acting as Vicars-Apostolic of the Pope. This matter, being at the time quite impracticable, came to nothing; but the Committee still bore it in mind and alluded to it in a "Letter to the Catholics of England," published April 10, 1787, from some expressions of which it appears that the tendency to interfere with the ecclesiatical government of the Church was already showing itself.

When this Committee reached the term of its office it was replaced by a "Committee of Ten," constituted at a meeting of English Catholics held on May 3, 1787. The action of this body was far more vigorous, though its guiding spirit was the same. Four members of the former Committee had been re-elected, and Mr. Butler was again appointed secretary. Within a year, they opened negotiations with the Prime Minister, Pitt, who promised to consider the question of the relief of the English Catholics, but desired the opinions of the leading Catholic universities abroad upon Catholic teaching with regard to civil allegiance. Difficulties also arose owing to popular misconception of other Catholic doctrines, so that it was

thought desirable to draw up a "Protestation" disclaiming some of the tenets imputed to Catholics. This document was accordingly drawn up; and copies of it were sent to the Vicars-Apostolic and circulated among Catholics for their signatures. This gave rise to further troubles, as the Vicars-Apostolic did not like the Protestation, even after it had been altered by themselves. At length, however, they signed it, as did most of the clergy, but with manifest reluctance, Dr. Walmesley, Bishop of Rama and Vicar-Apostolic of the Western District, subsequently withdrawing his signature. Such signatures as were obtained were given for the most part on the understanding that there was to be no new oath imposed by the Act, the existing oath of the Act of 1778 being considered to meet all requirements. But in spite of the assurances of their agents, the next act of the Committee was to draw up a new oath, which they asserted was necessary in order to persuade Parliament to grant the desired relief. This oath in its plain meaning was one no Catholic could take. Not only was it unsound in its declaration on the Pope's spiritual power, but it imposed on Catholics the unheard-of name "Protesting Catholic Dissenters"—a name which Milner subsequently branded as "in itself an ensign of schism."

The bishops now recognized the situation as serious, and lost no time in dealing with the matter. At a meeting at Hammersmith on October 19, 1789, the four Vicars-Apostolic condemned the oath as unlawful, declaring that none of the faithful "ought to take any oath, or subscribe any instrument, wherein the interests of religion are concerned, without the previous approbation of their respective bishops." The reply of the Committee was an appeal to the Catholics of England, and a letter to the bishops in which they refused submission. Within a few months, circumstances called forth a fresh condemnation of the oath. In January, 1790, the Vicar-Apostolic of the London District, "the good Bishop Talbot," passed away, and not long after occurred the death of Bishop Matthew Gibson, of the

Northern District; but they were succeeded by two prelates of the same temper. Dr. Douglass was made Vicar-Apostolic of the London District, and Dr. William Gibson succeeded his dead brother in the North. When the bishops-elect met Dr. Walmesley at Lulworth Castle to be consecrated, they joined him in publishing a new condemnation of the oath. The Committee remained obstinate, stating, through the secretary, that the condemnation "did not withhold the Committee from continuing their exertions to obtain the passing of the Bill, or induce them to take any step for obtaining an alteration of the oath." Thus resolute, they stuck at nothing. Disclaiming submission to the bishops, they published what has been called "The Schismatical Protest," and prepared for the introduction of their Bill into Parliament. They proposed that relief should be given only to those Catholics who were willing to take the oath and to describe themselves as "Protesting Catholic Dissenters." Thus Catholics who remained faithful to the bishops, and to the principles which had guided their fathers from the times of the Reformation, who clung to the name of Catholic, their heritage from the days of St. Augustine, were to be left under the crushing burden of the Penal Laws.

This was the situation when the time came for the Catholic Relief Bill of 1791 to be introduced into Parliament. On the one hand, there was the Committee assured of success, with the goodwill of the Government, and with friends in both Houses of Parliament; on the other hand were the bishops, powerless to prevent the passing of a Bill which they foresaw would create so dangerous a division in their flock, and unable to prevail on the defiant Committee to amend the obnoxious measure. Their cause appeared so hopeless, that even courageous Bishop Walmesley, whose sturdy maintenance of the rights of the Church had won for him in his old age the name of "the old Lion of Rama," could see no human means of averting the blow, but sought refuge in prayer alone. From out

of the West came his pathetic words: "I have asked my Master that this bad oath may not pass; and He will grant my prayer."

That prayer was heard. God was about to raise up a champion to free the Catholics of England from this bad oath, and from much besides. In the hour of difficulty, He put it into the hearts of the bishops to call to their assistance a man whose strength of character and wealth of resource were to turn the tide of battle—a man whom the Committee in the hour of defeat chose to describe as "one John Milner."

At the time when Milner was thus called upon to take part in public affairs he had not long completed his forty-first year, having been born on October 14, 1752, in London, where his childhood was spent. His father's name was Miller, and his own baptismal certificate gives his name as John Miller; but this name was changed to Milner, while he was still a schoolboy. He received his first religious instruction from the venerable Bishop Challoner, who took a keen interest in the lad and assisted him in obtaining his education. After a year's schooling at Edgbaston, near Birmingham, he was removed, in 1765, to Sedgley Park School; but as he was already studying for the priesthood, Bishop Challoner thought it advisable to send him, the following year, to Douay, where nearly all the priests destined for the English Mission were educated. For the next twelve years he remained in the English College there, continuing his studies, until he was ordained priest, in 1777. He then returned to London, living in Gray's Inn, seeing much of Bishop Challoner, and being entrusted by him with the care of the library which belonged to the clergy of the London District. During the two years that followed, he had no regular appointment, but served in various places where a priest was temporarily wanted. The last place he thus supplied was Winchester, where a fever had broken out among the French prisoners of war detained there. The need for his services was great, as the priest of the place, Rev. J. Nolan, had died, a victim

of charity, amid his suffering flock. The state of things was terrible : many hundreds of the prisoners with nearly all the medical staff and prison authorities died of the infection, so that the young priest found a wide field for his charity and zeal. Owing to the excellent work he did during this crisis, Bishop Challoner, towards the end of the year, gave him the permanent charge of the mission, in spite of some dissatisfaction on the part of the congregation, who, misled by their new priest's youthful appearance, complained that the bishop had sent them a boy. From this date Milner resided at Winchester, working zealously among his flock, and taking an active interest in the public events and past history of the cathedral city. He also commenced to write—his first publication being a funeral discourse on Bishop Challoner, who passed away in 1781. In this Milner bears testimony to the extent to which that venerable prelate had influenced his character and career.

But while his activity found wide scope for itself in his duties at Winchester, he did not remain unmoved by the course public affairs were taking in consequence of the action of the Catholic Committee. Of this action he disapproved from the first, his distrust being awakened by the Committee's " Letter to the Catholics of England." With his natural tendency to speak out, he wrote, showing the schismatical tendency of the letter, but suppressed this reply at the desire of Bishop James Talbot, who had succeeded Dr. Challoner, and who at that time hoped for good results from the labours of the Committee,—thinking that with prudent guidance their efforts might do much for the cause of Catholic relief. Before his decease in 1790, the good bishop had reason to alter his opinion, and on his deathbed expressed his intention of writing against the Committee if he recovered. But though Milner's pamphlet had been withdrawn, his assistance was welcomed in other ways, and he was called to attend the Hammersmith meeting in 1789, when the bishops condemned the oath. The course of events after Bishop Talbot's death did not improve ; and during

1790 Milner entered into a controversy with one of the members of the Committee, Sir J. Throckmorton, who had written a pamphlet maintaining the right of the clergy and laity to elect their own bishops without reference to the Pope. This was one of the signs of the spirit that prompted the Committee to exceed their proper limits.

Thus by the beginning of 1791 affairs had reached the acutely critical stage already described. The Committee, in spite of persuasion, remonstrance, or argument, had carried their bill with its schismatical oath to the table of the House of Commons; and the bishops found themselves powerless to avert the threatened blow, involving as it did disunion, division, possibly schism to the Catholic Church in this country.

In circumstances such as these, Milner was not the man to remain unmoved. The bishops turned to him in their hour of need, calling upon him to champion their cause. He answered by prompt and decisive action. Furnished with a written appointment as the agent of Bishops Walmesley, Gibson, and Douglass, he lost no time in preparations, but flung himself at once into the midst of the fray. He immediately left Winchester for London, writing a pamphlet in the coach on the way. As soon as he reached the scene of action, he sent his pamphlet to press, saw Burke, Fox, Pitt himself, in rapid succession, had interviews with Anglican bishops and other members of Parliament, and urged on all the insufficiency of the Bill, pleading the cause of those Catholics who stood faithful to their bishops and their ancient traditions.

The 1st of March was the day appointed for the introduction of the Bill. Milner went down to the House of Commons, only to find himself, as he wrote in after years, "amid a crowd of exulting adversaries, while his friends were on their knees at home praying God to protect His own cause." He had taken steps to have a copy of his pamphlet handed to each member as he entered the House—a measure which proved the death-blow of the measure as drafted. The debate was

proceeding. Fox and Burke had spoken in favour of relieving Catholics; Pitt had followed in ambiguous terms, not having made up his mind whether it would be better to relieve both parties by one Act, or to pass the Bill in favour of the "Protesting Catholic Dissenters," leaving all other Catholics in their original position, save for the repeal of the obsolete death penalties; when the Attorney-General, Sir Archibald Macdonald, rose with a statement that settled the question for ever. "As he was entering the House," he said, "a paper had been put into his hands which proved that one of the Catholic parties were as good subjects and as much entitled to favour as the other." This statement caused a profound sensation. Pitt read the pamphlet, and in conversation soon afterwards declared: "We have been deceived in the great outlines of the Bill; and either the other party must be relieved, or the Bill not passed."

The battle was won. From this time, as Milner said, "the fate of the Bill, though the passing of it was delayed for three months, may be said to have been in the hands of the Vicars-Apostolic." The bad oath was struck out, and that of the Irish Relief Act of 1778 was substituted. The obnoxious name "Protesting Catholic Dissenters" was dropped, while the provisions of the Act gave relief to all Catholics alike.

Milner had gained a decisive victory; but the members of the Committee could ill brook their defeat. They called upon him to furnish proof of his authority to act on behalf of any other Catholics but himself. He showed that he was formally deputed by three Vicars-Apostolic to act as their agent, and proved that the main body of English Catholics looked to their bishops, and not to the Committee, for guidance in such matters as the oath. To this the Committee replied in a "Statement of Facts," which was printed and circulated among members of Parliament. Among other statements, it set forth, that "one John Milner," who had issued the notorious pamphlet "on behalf of thousands," being called upon for his authority in making these assertions,

"could only produce the names of *three persons*—and those never chosen to transact business in their, the Catholics', names." These "three persons" were three out of the four bishops who then ruled the Church in England!

The manœuvre failed; the Bill, as amended, passed unanimously through the two Houses, and in due time received the Royal Assent. This Catholic Relief Act of 1791 closed the active persecution which for two hundred and thirty years had endeavoured to drive the Catholic Church out of this country: and it inaugurated a new state of things. Churches and schools began to rise, while the enormous influx of French *emigré* clergy, so generously received by the nation in the following years, did much for the revival of the Faith. Having gained a footing by this Act, Catholics could now begin to labour for complete emancipation. Nothing less than this could satisfy justice; for though our public worship and our schools were legalized, and though many unjust restrictions had been removed, we still laboured under numerous disabilities. We were denied the franchise, debarred from sitting or voting in either House of Parliament, excluded from office under Government, as well as from corporate bodies, and deprived of many other rights as British subjects. Catholics accordingly commenced the struggle which was finally crowned with success by the Emancipation Act of 1829.

In this struggle Milner was to play a leading part. But this new combat lay in the future, and for a brief space all was quiet. The Committee of Ten ceased to transact active business, and practically dissolved, only to begin a new existence as the Cisalpine Club. Milner himself returned to Winchester, and settled down again to the quiet daily routine of a priest's life, having in this single-handed struggle procured for all Catholics, without distinction, the relief of an Act which was the foundation of the new position gained by the Church in this country.

The smouldering resentment which Milner had in-

curred by his opposition to the Committee was fanned into flame by his success in defeating their measure. Thus arose the steady enmity and opposition which met him at every turn during his subsequent career. This hostility showed itself at once in a manifestation of unpopularity. Speaking, long afterwards, of this time he wrote: "I was in so much disgrace with a great part of those of my Communion in London, that they nicknamed me Lord George Gordon, and would not speak to me in the streets for that very conduct for which they are now obliged to me, namely, for being instrumental in preserving for them their family name and their unchangeable creed."

But Milner was not the man to care for unpopularity, or to be moved by what others said or thought of him. Returning to Winchester, he occupied himself with the affairs of his mission there, his first work being the erection of a new chapel in place of the old building which had been in use since the end of the seventeenth century. This was a work in which he took a deep interest, for he had carefully studied the principles of Gothic architecture, then much neglected, and had come to be regarded as an authority on the subject. His appreciation of this style of architecture, and his consequent investigation of the principles which govern it—in which matter he anticipated by half a century the Gothic revival under Pugin—resulted not only in the erection of what is said to be the first Gothic chapel built in England since the Reformation, but also in the publication of three works on architecture. Probably his interest in the subject had been promoted by his studies of the antiquities of Winchester, particularly of the cathedral, which he dearly loved. For nearly ten years it had been his recreation to investigate the archæology and history of the cathedral city; but his intimate acquaintance with the subject would probably have led to no special result had it not been for a lucky chance which induced him to commence his *History of Winchester*. As his researches had already been made, the

writing of the book occupied but one year. As soon as the work was published it attracted the notice of the public and brought him increased reputation, much commendation, and some criticism which led to important results. In the same year, 1798, he published his *Life of Bishop Challoner*—a short but vivid memoir, containing many particulars concerning that saintly prelate which would otherwise have been lost. A voluminous writer at all times, Milner was especially active with his pen during this period of comparative rest, and to this time his best work belongs. The books already published were to lead to greater things. The History contained a criticism on the Anglican Bishop Hoadley, which provoked the Chancellor of Winchester, Dr. Sturges, to write a reply entitled *Reflections on Popery*, and Milner's spirit was roused by the misrepresentations of Catholic doctrine and practice it contained. It was not long before he published in reply the *Letters to a Prebendary*—a controversial work the like of which English Catholics had never seen before. The effect of this book, which appeared in 1800, was electrical. It was discussed in Parliament, attacked by the Lord Chancellor, defended by an Anglican bishop; while so great was the excitement and alarm caused by its appearance, that an ineffectual attempt was made to silence Milner by a pension; for it was feared that the controversy, if continued, would but provoke another polemic from his pen. In fact he was engaged on such a work, the famous *End of Religious Controversy*—a work even more powerful than its predecessor, as being constructive rather than destructive, proving, as it does, the Divine authority of the Church, and showing that the first principles of Christianity lead with inexorable logic to the Catholic Church. But where the proposed pension failed, persuasion succeeded. Dr. Horsley, the Anglican Prelate above mentioned, begged Milner to discontinue the controversy with Dr. Sturges. This request Milner complied with, on account of the defence of his previous work by Dr. Horsley in the

House of Lords. Thus it happened that the *End of Religious Controversy* was withheld, until circumstances forced its completion and publication some sixteen years afterwards.

These contests were soon to be exchanged for the fiercer strife of public affairs. It had become evident that one who had already fought so well for the interests of the Church, could not long remain in the obscurity of the little mission at Winchester. Before the end of the eighteenth century, death had caused important changes among the small body of bishops. Dr. Walmesley of the Western District, who had been the most prominent figure among English Catholics since the death of Bishop Challoner, closed his long strenuous life in November, 1797. Within a few months, he was followed to the grave by Bishop Berington of the Midland District, whose successor, Dr. Gregory Stapleton, was not appointed until 1801, and died on May 23, 1802, after an episcopate of little more than a year. Eight months later, Milner was chosen by Propaganda to fill the vacant Vicariate. So great was his unwillingness to assume the responsibilities of the episcopal office, that it was only after the earnest entreaties of his friends that he gave a reluctant consent. By a decree of Propaganda, January 24, 1803, approved by the Pope on the 30th of the same month, he was appointed Bishop of Castabala *in partibus infidelium*, and Vicar-Apostolic of the Midland District.

Dr. Milner was consecrated bishop in his own chapel of St. Peter at Winchester, by Bishop Douglass, assisted by Bishops Gibson and Sharrock, on May 22, 1803. After a brief visit to St. Edmund's College, Old Hall, where he preached the sermon at the consecration of Dr. Poynter, the new Coadjutor-Bishop of the London District, Milner set out for his future home at Longbirch, near Wolverhampton, which he reached on June 22, 1803. His district was large, embracing fifteen counties—Oxford, Warwick, Worcester, Salop, Stafford, Derby, Nottingham, Lincoln, Northampton, Cam-

bridge, Norfolk, Suffolk, Huntingdon, Rutland, and Leicester. It was an unwieldy straggling district to govern. But in many of these counties there were no known Catholics, while his entire flock numbered less than fifteen thousand. As the Bishop himself said—"it was a long way from Ipswich to Oswestry"; and tedious cross-country journeys had to be undertaken, in order that the necessary visitations might be made and the Sacrament of Confirmation administered. Moreover, there were peculiar difficulties to be dealt with which Dr. Milner had clearly foreseen; for the Midland District had been the stronghold of the members of the Catholic Committee. The few supporters they had among the clergy were from the Midlands, and were, in fact, known by the name of "the Staffordshire Clergy."

While, on the one hand, the bishop seems to have accepted his position with anxious forebodings, doubtless, on the other, some of his subjects awaited the coming of their new Vicar-Apostolic with no little apprehension. During the struggle with the Catholic Committee, his character and motives had been painted by his opponents in the worst colours; and since then, calumny had been busy with his name. But on his arrival these clouds seem to have passed away very speedily; for in his first Pastoral Letter he was able to announce that peace was restored throughout his district. This Pastoral Letter, which was issued about seven months after his consecration, foreshadows the whole character of his Episcopate. His untiring advocacy of the right of the Church to the unfaltering obedience of her children, and his zeal for the encouragement of sanctity and learning among the clergy, find eloquent expression in this letter, which concludes with a reference to the pressing need of ecclesiastical seminaries, for the English Colleges at Douay and St. Omer had fallen victims to the French Revolution. At the time of which we speak, most of Dr. Milner's ecclesiastical students were placed at Sedgley Park, at which school he had received a part of his own

education, and for which he always entertained a warm affection. Hence he no sooner reached his new district than he hastened to visit the school, so that his first administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation might take place there. Among the Sedgley Park boys, who on that June day flocked to the railings of their playground to witness the arrival of the new bishop, was a little lad some seven years old, destined in after years to be Dr. Milner's friend and biographer. Nearly sixty years later Provost Husenbeth thus recalled the appearance of Dr. Milner on that occasion: "He was now fifty years of age, in full health and undiminished strength, with a florid countenance, and of robust make. He was above the middle stature, and his black hair was only just beginning to turn grey." Husenbeth further adds: "We were much struck with his commanding voice and energetic delivery in the addresses which he made to those who were to be confirmed."

All the accounts of Dr. Milner's personal appearance and manner of living give the same impression of strength—the dignified carriage, loud voice, bold handwriting, the strong likes and dislikes, the emphasis and decision which stamp even the most trivial remark that has been preserved to us. His masterful spirit revealed itself amid even the most trifling surroundings; so that in the little things of life, as well as in the great, Bishop Milner appears to have borne himself as one who was indeed a ruler among men. Though his manner seems to have been somewhat abrupt and rough at times, his real kindliness of heart and considerateness for others won for him the devoted attachment of those who lived with him. Under his vehement nature lay an almost childlike simplicity, which naturally revealed itself in his love for children. In private as in public life his straightforwardness led him always to speak his mind plainly, though at times to the discomfiture of his hearers; but he submitted readily to correction from others, while he never showed the least resentment

when he met with contradiction or disrespect. His charity to the poor was very great. His own manner of living was simple, and his dress always plain; while his dislike of all display was shown in many homely customs which he retained to the end of his life.

For the first few years of his episcopate, Dr. Milner enjoyed a period of comparative peace,—a time which he devoted to the visitation and organization of his district. In order to be more accessible to his clergy, as well as for other reasons, the bishop decided, in 1804, to give up his house at Longbirch. He accordingly left there at Michaelmas, and removed to Wolverhampton, where he resided for the rest of his life.

One of the most important changes which Bishop Milner accomplished in his district was the reconstitution of Oscott College—a work which he effected in 1808. The lay committee, which had conducted the college since it was founded in 1794, had become involved in debt, and consequently felt themselves unable to carry on the undertaking. They offered to transfer the college to the bishop, if he would accept it with all the liabilities. Rather than see it closed, Dr. Milner, after some hesitation, accepted the offer. On the feast of the Assumption he reopened the college under superiors of his own choice, and dedicated it anew to the Blessed Virgin. From that time he watched over its fortunes with the greatest solicitude, enlarging and improving the building, while he kept the administration under his supervision. He often visited the college; and when, some years later, he brought from Rome the first stained-glass window of the Sacred Heart ever introduced into England, it was at Oscott that he placed it—thus giving the college the honour of containing the first English sanctuary of the Sacred Heart.[1]

[1] This window still exists in the oratory which the bishop built adjoining the college chapel. When the new college was built in 1838, the old building was converted into a preparatory school, but subsequently became for a time the home of Cardinal Newman and Father Faber, who to distinguish it from New Oscott gave it the

But Milner's activity was not to be confined to the limits of his own district. There was work for him to do which affected the interests of all British and Irish Catholics; for their grievances had become one of the burning political questions of the day. Very soon after the Act of Union in 1801, ministers recognized the difficulty of governing Ireland so long as the grievance of Catholic disabilities continued: but opinions varied as to the best way of meeting this difficulty. Some politicians, whose view was shared by the King himself, were opposed to any concessions whatever; others were willing to grant relief, but only on condition that Catholics should furnish certain securities—the chief of which became known as "the Veto."

This Veto question had its roots in the negotiations prior to the Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland. In order to commend this measure to the Irish people, Pitt had intended to pass along with it a Catholic Emancipation Bill. By this Bill he had designed to offer some State provision for the Catholic prelates and clergy —in return for which a certain measure of Government interference in the appointment of bishops would have been exacted. But though nothing came of the negotiations which Pitt commenced with some Irish bishops in 1799, the idea was not forgotten. Indications of it were given during a debate on an Irish Catholic Petition in 1805. The question of State provision for Catholic clergy it is true was not again heard of; but as regards the other question, nearly all the politicians who favoured Catholic Emancipation thought it was only reasonable that in return for it Catholics should allow the Crown a voice in the appointment of their bishops. Thus the question put to the Catholics of these islands was

name of Maryvale –a name it has borne ever since. It is now an Orphanage and Convent of the Sisters of Mercy. Bishop Milner's oratory, containing the little window and the altar at which he used to say Mass, is zealously tended by the Sisters, who have founded an association which keeps a lamp perpetually burning there in honour of the Sacred Heart.

whether restoration to their complete civil rights was to be purchased by allowing a Protestant ministry the right to interfere in the government of the Church. Many Catholics, including some of the bishops, thought that it would be well to buy their liberty at the cost of allowing the Government a negative Veto consisting in the right of forbidding a proposed appointment. Others, including Charles Butler and many of the members and supporters of the former Catholic Committee, seem to have been ready to go to any lengths of complaisance to the Government; while others again, led by the whole Irish hierarchy, refused to hear of the Veto in any shape or form—being prepared to make any sacrifice to preserve the perfect freedom of the Church in the election of her bishops. This was the policy championed in England by Bishop Milner, who, once convinced of the danger of even a negative Veto, consistently opposed and finally defeated every attempt to introduce the Veto in any form.

It is obvious that even had all Catholics been willing to conciliate the Government in the proposed way, their consent to the Veto could not have been lawful without the consent of the Pope. Hence it is not surprising that Milner should have sought the advice of the Holy See as early as 1805, when his foresight led him to anticipate the raising of the question—although it had not then been formally or publicly proposed. He received an answer, dated September 7, 1805, "which strongly deprecated State pensions to our bishops, declared that no power could be conceded to any Protestant sovereign to nominate Catholic bishops, admitted that *a mere negative power* of objecting to candidates for the Episcopacy had fewer difficulties, but still strongly asserted that if this was ever conceded, effectual precautions must be taken to prevent the negative from growing into a positive power."[1]

In 1807, the Irish bishops appointed Dr. Milner as

[1] Husenbeth's *Life of Bishop Milner*, p. 125.

their agent in London to represent their interests with regard to the Catholic "question"—thus giving him an official position distinct from that which he already occupied as one of the Vicars-Apostolic.

In the meantime the advocates of the Veto were not idle. In the same year some Catholic laymen, with the avowed purpose of defending Catholic interests in the press, founded a literary association, which in the following year was developed into "The Catholic Board" a body which took upon itself the defence of Catholic interests in general. All the priests of Great Britain were invited to become members, while the names of all the bishops were placed upon the standing committee. The Catholic Board appears to have been formally established on May 23, 1808. Two days later there was a debate in the House of Commons on Grattan's motion to consider the Irish petition for the repeal of the penal laws.

This debate marks an important stage in the history of the Veto question; for in Grattan's opening speech explicit mention of the Veto was made for the first time in public. Milner had arrived in London on May 20th, to be present at the debate, and on the following morning had had an interview with Mr. Ponsonby, who was to take a leading part in the proceedings. In the course of the conversation, Milner stated, in reply to a direct question, that the Irish prelates "could not attribute to his Majesty a *positive power* in this business; but," he added, "I believe on good ground that they are disposed to attribute a *negative power* to him." However, in the absence of definite instructions he declined to answer positively.

When the debate was opened in the House, Milner occupied a seat in the gallery. Grattan, who opened the debate, was followed by Ponsonby, who, in the course of his speech, made the astounding declaration that "the Catholic bishops had no objection to make the King virtually the head of their Church; and that a bishop appointed by the Pope, if disapproved by his

Majesty, should not be allowed to take upon himself his spiritual functions."

Milner's own pen has recorded his feelings on hearing these statements. "These assertions, as they filled every one else who heard them with astonishment, so they pierced the writer's heart (who equally heard them and on whose authority they were stated to be made) with grief and confusion." Milner at once wrote a letter to the Irish bishops, in which, while denying the truth of Ponsonby's statements, he explained what had really passed at the interview.

When the report of the debate reached Ireland, public indignation was unbounded. At a public meeting, the bishops having met and approved of Dr. Milner's conduct as their agent, passed resolutions denouncing any alteration in the mode of appointing bishops. These resolutions were so decisive, that little more was heard of the Veto for some time; but, so far as Milner was concerned, the incident was not at an end. An Irish bishop having sent him a letter, wherein his statement made during the conversation with Ponsonby was severely blamed, he wrote in reply his celebrated *Letter to a Parish Priest*, in which he considered the means by which a negative form of Veto "might be effected without violation of the Catholic discipline or danger to it." No act in Dr. Milner's life has provoked more discussion. On the strength of this letter, which he himself described as a mooting essay, his enemies then and long afterwards claimed him as a supporter of the Veto; while his apparent advocacy of a measure which on all other occasions he strenuously opposed, has since called forth various explanations. It would have been no difficult task for Dr. Milner to explain the apparent inconsistency; but such a course would have been unlike him.

As soon as he perceived the sense in which his pamphlet had been understood, he adopted no half-measures, but boldly and fully retracted it. His courage and humility retrieved the situation: misunderstanding was swept away; and the retractation only served to

emphasize his opposition to the Veto in the eyes of the world.

The decisive action of the Irish bishops, together with Milner's outspoken fortitude, rendered the very name "Veto" so suspicious in Catholic ears, that all open advocacy of it, for the time at least, was useless. But the partisans of the Veto did not cease from their efforts to come to some arrangement with the Government. If the Veto could not be openly proposed, it might still be introduced in a covert manner, so that the same end would be attained. But the question did not enter on its new phase till more than a year had passed away.

It was early in 1810 when Grattan gave notice that he would bring the Catholic question once more before Parliament. That section of Catholics which was willing to procure emancipation at any cost was at once active. The policy to be adopted was arranged at a meeting between a deputation of Catholic gentlemen and two prominent statesmen, Lord Grenville and Lord Grey, who were known to be favourable to the Catholic claims. The result of this meeting appeared in a resolution drawn up by these Catholic gentlemen in order to be proposed at a general meeting of Catholics which was about to be held. This document became famous as the "Fifth Resolution." Doubtless those who framed it hoped, that the guarded terms in which it was couched, while not awakening the suspicions of those Catholics who were determined opponents of the Veto, would satisfy the two Peers, who had demanded some guarantee from Catholics for the loyalty of future bishops. But while Lord Grenville agreed at the meeting that the *word* "Veto" was to be carefully avoided, it is clear, from a letter which the Earl of Fingall received from him some days previously, that nothing less than the Veto would satisfy him. It is equally clear, that the wording of the resolution would not prevent the Veto from being included among the securities which Catholics, accepting the resolution, would thereby express themselves willing to offer to the Government.

Foreseeing that this and other objections would be made, the authors of the resolution determined to stifle the anticipated opposition by obtaining, before the meeting took place, a sanction of the resolution from Dr. Milner. Accordingly the bishop, who arrived in London on January 30th, received an invitation to meet some friends at dinner on the following evening—an invitation which he accepted under the impression that he was being asked to a friendly gathering. During the course of the day following his arrival, he had an interview with Bishops Douglass and Poynter, at which the three prelates discussed the newly drafted resolution, and unanimously agreed to oppose it. Proceeding to the hotel where the dinner was to be held, Dr. Milner found there several Catholic gentlemen, including the secretary of the Catholic Board. What passed on the conclusion of the dinner he has told us himself: "The dinner was no sooner removed and the waiters withdrawn, than the secretary stood up and read aloud the resolutions prepared for the next day's meeting, when several voices at once asked the writer, 'Dr. Milner, will you sign these resolutions?' He then perceived the object of this extraordinary dinner, and though taken by surprise, yet, as he clearly saw the Veto in its most hideous form couched in the fifth and last of the resolutions, he immediately answered that he could not sign that particular resolution." He was then assailed with arguments, questions, and importunities; in his own words, he was "baited and tortured on every side by the company present for an hour and more, to make him consent to it, till he found relief in a flood of tears." These tears, shed by a courageous, warm-hearted man, suddenly beset by this persecution from his own friends, prove what it cost Milner to hold his ground amid such persistent opposition.

All the bishops except Drs. Douglass and Gibson were present at the general meeting at St. Alban's Tavern on the following day. When the Fifth Resolution was put to the vote, they abstained from voting; nevertheless, it was

understood that their signatures would subsequently be sought. Before the proceedings had commenced, Dr. Poynter, speaking for Dr. Douglass as well as for himself, had assured Bishop Milner that he would not sign the Fifth Resolution; and Dr. Collingridge, Vicar-Apostolic of the Western District, had joined in this assurance. Yet, in spite of these assurances, before the evening was out both Bishop Poynter and Bishop Collingridge were persuaded to sign the resolution. Dr. Milner, who had been called to another part of the room, could not believe his eyes when the signatures were shown him; but both prelates acknowledged their handwriting. Shortly afterwards Bishops Douglass and Gibson added their signatures, leaving Bishop Milner alone in his opposition to the resolution.

Wide-reaching were the evil results of this meeting; but no result was worse than the division thus produced in the episcopate. Hitherto, the Vicars-Apostolic of England had been a united body, and Catholics had always been able to look to them for guidance; henceforth they were to be at variance for many years to come.

Long afterwards, Milner thus summed up the consequences of the Fifth Resolution: "It was a resolution which separated the Irish from the English Catholics, divided the last-mentioned among themselves, carried discord into the bosom of the sanctuary, distressed the See Apostolic beyond words, and at length brought forth the persecuting and schismatical Bill of 1813."

The rejection by the House of Commons of Grattan's motion once more suspended for a time the consideration of the Catholic question. The matter, however, was far from being at an end. A heated controversy on the subject of the Veto was carried on, in the course of which Milner continued his opposition to the Fifth Resolution in every possible way, urging and explaining his objections in pastorals, pamphlets, and letters. Knowing that the other bishops were still opposed to the Veto, and believing them to have been overreached in the

matter of the Fifth Resolution, he made every effort to induce them to act in concert—even kneeling to them on three different occasions—but his efforts were in vain. On the other side, attempts were not wanting to induce him to alter his opinions. On one occasion he was invited to visit the Marquis of Buckingham, and he found on his arrival at Stowe that he had been asked there to meet a party assembled for the express purpose of persuading him to give way in his opposition to the "Catholic Board." During the whole evening he remained firm, in spite of all importunities; but retiring for the night, weary and disheartened, he determined not to run the risk of a renewed attack. Rising early in the morning, he found his way out of the house, and drove off in his gig singing the Psalm, *In exitu Israel*—"When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a barbarous people."

About this time his relations with Dr. Poynter had become very strained. This was owing, not only to the question of the Fifth Resolution, but also to serious differences of opinion concerning the treatment of what was known as the "Blanchardist Schism" existing among the French *emigré* clergy. Milner, therefore, thought it necessary to write, for private circulation, a pamphlet entitled *An Explanation with Dr. Poynter.* This pamphlet was a reply to the complaints which that prelate had made against him to the Archbishop of Dublin. The Irish bishops, seeing the interests of the Church in both countries injured by these differences among the English Vicars-Apostolic, sent Dr. Moylan, Bishop of Cork, to England in 1812, on a mission of reconciliation. This venerable prelate brought about a meeting of the Vicars-Apostolic at Durham, but without any successful result, although Dr. Milner seized the opportunity to offer an apology for any expression in his writings which might have caused pain to the other bishops, especially to Dr. Poynter.

But while the other bishops at this meeting saw no need to reconsider their course of action with regard to

the Fifth Resolution, Bishop Milner clearly foresaw the evil use that would be made of it; and his opposition to it was afterwards more than justified by the Bill for Emancipation introduced into Parliament in 1813. The provisions of this Bill not only gave the right of Veto to the Crown, but vested in the commissioners who were to exercise that right, the power to examine all documents and correspondence that should pass between the bishops and the Holy See. These were the securities which, in the opinion of the framers of the Bill, Catholics, in accordance with the terms of the Fifth Resolution, would be willing to give in exchange for emancipation. As soon as the provisions of the Bill were made public, Milner hastened to London. Since Bishop Poynter—who had become Vicar-Apostolic of the London District through the death of Bishop Douglass the previous year—would not commit himself to an open opposition to the Bill, Milner determined once more to fight alone the battle for the liberty of the Church. In a few hours he wrote his *Brief Memorial on the Catholic Relief Bill*, and caused it to be printed and circulated among members of Parliament. Besides issuing this pamphlet, which exposed the schismatical and oppressive nature of the Bill, he made one final but ineffectual effort to induce Bishops Poynter and Collingridge to join him in opposing the measure. When Milner left his fellow-bishops after this meeting—which took place on May 24th, the day on which the Bill was to come on in Committee in the House of Commons—"the success of the Bill," he tells us,[1] "on its third reading was as confidently anticipated as the rising of the sun the next morning; but," he adds, "God was pleased to have mercy on the remnant of His holy religion in this kingdom, and particularly on the individual Catholics who were blindly rushing forward to the brink of schism." In the course of debate, an amendment debarring Catholics from the right of sitting

[1] *Supplementary Memoirs*, p. 209.

and voting in Parliament was proposed and carried by a majority of four; whereupon the Bill was dropped, on the ground that with this limitation it was worthy neither of the acceptance of Catholics nor of the support of those who introduced it."

The anger of the "Catholic Board" at the defeat of the Bill was vented on Dr. Milner. At a meeting held on May 29th—after a vote of censure had been passed upon the bishop's *Brief Memorial*—he was called on to explain whom he meant by the expression "false brethren" contained in it. Dr. Milner, pointing to his chief adversary, replied: "There is Charles Butler there." Amid a scene of wild excitement a vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Butler, while a further resolution was passed expelling Dr. Milner from the "Catholic Board." As he had been warned on the previous day that his public expulsion from the Board would be effected, he was not unprepared for this humiliation, which he met with dignity and meekness. Rising from his seat, he read a few words of protest which he had prepared, and then moved towards the door, exclaiming: "I hope you will not turn me out of the Catholic Church, nor shut me out of the Kingdom of Heaven." When he reached the door he paused to add: "Gentlemen, you consider me unfit for your company on earth; may God make me fit for your company in heaven!" With these words he left the room. These proceedings, which became known as "the Milner baiting," had been intended as an insult, but through the bishop's magnanimity they have served but to show his real greatness.

The expulsion of Milner from the Catholic Board was only the prelude to a series of attacks on him which were designed to destroy his credit both with the Catholics of England and with the Holy See. The first blow was soon struck. Through an intrigue of some members of the Board, he was deliberately excluded from a meeting of English and Scottish bishops, which took place at Durham, in October, 1813, and was thus placed in the seeming position of one who,

having been denounced by representatives of the Catholic laity, was now also disowned by his Episcopal brethren. Calumnious charges against him continued to be spread in all directions; so that he found it necessary to publish a letter undertaking to refute publicly those who in secret accused him of losing his temper, of being overbearing, and even of betraying confidential secrets. It is clear that in Rome these and similar charges had already been made against him, because some months before the Durham meeting he had received a letter from Mgr. Quarantotti, Secretary of Propaganda, containing a list of complaints that had been received. These charges had been disposed of by a synodical letter sent by the Irish bishops to Rome; but the matter was not allowed to rest there. The "Catholic Board," which was represented in Rome by an agent, was busy with intrigues, having for their purpose not only opposition to Milner, but an attempt to obtain the sanction of the Holy See to the principles of Grattan's defeated Bill.

The state of affairs in Rome at this time was anomalous. The Pope was prisoner at Fontainebleau, the Cardinals were driven into exile, and the regular government of the Church was thus rendered impossible. The management of affairs during this unhappy time remained in the hands of Mgr. Quarantotti, Secretary of Propaganda. Influenced by the representations of the agent to the Catholic Board, he was induced to take a step with regard to the affairs of the English Catholics, which, though subsequently revoked by the Holy See as being outside the powers entrusted to him, for the time being led to fresh complications of a most serious kind. His action took the form of an official letter, which became known as "Quarantotti's Rescript," and in which he declared that "Catholics ought to receive and embrace with content and gratitude the law which was proposed last year for their emancipation." This Rescript, which was addressed to Bishop Poynter, caused the greatest excitement in England and Ireland. Milner, seeing in

Quarantotti's action the undoing of his whole policy, immediately set out for Rome in order to lay his cause at the feet of the Vicar of Christ, who had been liberated shortly before the abdication of Napoleon in 1814, and was then on his way to take possession of Rome. Milner, leaving England on May 2, 1814, crossed the Channel in an open boat, and reached Rome shortly after the Holy Father had made his triumphal entry. Within a few days he had an audience of the Pope, who told him that Quarantotti ought not to have signed the Rescript without Papal authority,—adding, that the whole matter was to be subjected to a close investigation. For the purpose of this inquiry, Dr. Milner laid before Propaganda a complete statement of the position of affairs in England, making an offer to resign his Vicariate, if such a step should be thought to be for the advantage of religion. With this written account the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda declared himself perfectly satisfied: he refused to entertain Dr. Milner's proposal to resign, and showed him every mark of consideration and esteem. For more than a year Milner remained in Rome, pending these proceedings, until in June, 1815, he was able to return to England victorious. A letter from the Holy See condemned all the various proposals for a Veto, rejected other provisions of the Bill of 1813, and laid down the only principles on which a most carefully restricted form of Veto might, if absolutely necessary, be framed.

But though little more was heard of the Veto for some years, the Catholic question continued to occupy public attention; and Bishop Milner continued active during the ensuing years in endeavouring to create a healthy public opinion, especially among Catholics, with regard to all the issues of the question. This he did in a constant stream of pamphlets and letters—the latter appearing for the most part in various small Catholic magazines, which had then commenced to appear. As time went on, he had the consolation of seeing the other bishops adopt his point of view with regard to the

questions raised in the Bill of 1813 ; while, in 1818, their united action put an end to the unfortunate Blanchardist schism among the French *emigré* clergy.

Although in the affairs of his Vicariate the bishop's zeal was indefatigable, he yet found time for labours which were to benefit the Church in all English-speaking countries. In 1818, he published his greatest work, the *End of Religious Controversy*—a book written in the main sixteen years before, but which he had suppressed, until a fresh attack on the Church by an Anglican bishop caused him to give it to the world. It has been frequently declared that this book more than any other English work has led to conversions to the Catholic Church.[1] But though the volume won the applause even of Dr. Milner's opponents, his other writings, particularly his letters in the *Orthodox Journal*, gave great displeasure in many quarters. The severity of much of his writing undoubtedly furnished his enemies with a ground of complaint, of which they were not slow to avail themselves ; and their representations to Rome on this point resulted in a severe letter of rebuke addressed to Dr. Milner by the Prefect of Propaganda at the command of the Pope, in which he was censured for his contributions to the *Orthodox Journal*, and forbidden to assist that magazine in any way. The bishop seems to have felt that the letter had been obtained by unfair means ; but he made no defence, and accepted the reproof in humble silence.

In 1820, he published his *Supplementary Memoirs of English Catholics*, to correct the false impressions as to current history given by Charles Butler's work, *Historical Memoirs of the English Catholics since the Reformation*. In retaliation, Mr. Butler lodged new complaints in Rome, but without result, while he also failed in his attempt to raise fresh difficulties between Dr. Milner and Bishop Poynter, whose previous differ-

[1] At the present time the edition which Dr. Rivington has edited for the Catholic Truth Society seems to promise a new career of usefulness for this Catholic classic.

ences, serious as they had been, had never interrupted the sincere friendship that existed between them. They had always corresponded on affectionate terms; and Dr. Poynter's name afterwards appeared as a legatee in Bishop Milner's will, while shortly before his death the Bishop asserted very earnestly that he would give the universe to possess half Dr. Poynter's merits in the sight of God. At the time of the publication of the *Supplementary Memoirs* Milner was nearly seventy years of age; and signs are not wanting that he now regarded his life-work as accomplished. Yet he continued to guard the interests of the Church with the same watchful care as of old. Fresh controversial works appeared; and while he was engaged on these, the course of public events proved a matter of grave anxiety to him, especially the Bills introduced into Parliament by Mr. Plunket in 1821, but rejected by the House of Lords.

But the large increase of Catholics and the spread of religion in his district consoled him amid the vexations of controversy and the depression of failing health. In the autumn of 1824, while making his visitation, he suffered a stroke of paralysis at Lichfield; but with indomitable energy he struggled on, refusing to interrupt his journey till his round of visits had been completed. It was evident, however, that his strength was no longer equal to the demands made upon it; so, in the following year, he obtained the appointment of Rev. Thomas Walsh, President of Oscott, as coadjutor. The consecration of the new prelate was performed though not without strain and effort—by Dr. Milner on May 1, 1825, in presence of the largest gathering of bishops that had assembled in England since the destruction of the ancient Hierarchy at the Reformation.

His robust constitution was now slowly, but surely, breaking up; and as the year 1825 passed away his strength ebbed with it. The beginning of 1826 found him very infirm, and preparing himself for the end. In the first days of March he made a Retreat as an immediate preparation for death, having previously set in order all

the affairs of his Vicariate. On Palm Sunday, which fell that year on March 19th, he was able to say Mass ; but it was the last time that he offered the Holy Sacrifice. On Holy Saturday he received Extreme Unction, after which he handed his keys to Bishop Walsh, and desired him to take charge of all things, saying : " I have now no more to do with this world ; let me turn to something more important." For a month he lingered, his only trouble being that he did not suffer more for the sake of his Divine Master. As long as he was conscious he received all the priests that came to ask his dying blessing ; but when one addressed him in the accustomed way as " My Lord," he replied : " Don't call me so any more : I am nothing now but plain John Milner, a poor sinner." When Bishop Walsh, who tended him with constant devotion, endeavoured to encourage him by the recollection of all his past labours for the Church of God, he answered : " Don't talk of any merits of mine : speak to me of the merits of my blessed Saviour." He also begged not to be disturbed in his meditations, so that he might keep himself in spirit at the foot of the Cross.

The 19th of April was the day the bishop had appointed that year for the annual meeting of his clergy at Sedgley Park. They met, but instead of transacting business retired to the chapel where they recited the prayers for the dying. About two o'clock in the afternoon, while they were still assembled, a messenger from Wolverhampton arrived with the expected tidings—Bishop Milner was dead.

Three years later, Catholic Emancipation was granted by an Act of Parliament which placed no restrictions on the liberty of the Church. The persistent vigilance with which Bishop Milner had defeated all unworthy compromises during his life, secured this victorious conclusion of the long struggle after his death.

It was his life-work, moreover, which made the restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy possible, for had the Veto, secured by a Concordat, been allowed to the English Government, the action of Pope Pius IX. in

1850 would, in all probability, have been rendered impossible.

Thus Milner was in truth the harbinger of the Second Spring. Nor was his memory forgotten on the eventful day when the new Hierarchy, headed by the first Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, held its first Provincial Synod; for in the historic words spoken on that day by John Henry Newman there was pictured a prophetic vision of that first Synod—"the resurrection of the Church"—as passing before the gaze of that Bishop "whose name is too great, too venerable, too dear to all Catholics to be confined to any part of England, when it is rather a household word in the mouths of us all."

ST. ANTONINUS

ARCHBISHOP OF FLORENCE

(1390-1459)

BY REV. FATHER BERTRAND WILBERFORCE, O.P.

THE end of the fourteenth century was a time of singular prosperity for the city of Florence. The power of the Medici family had not yet risen up, and the city was a republic with many sons of great genius as artists, sculptors, and architects. Among them was Brunelleschi, who designed the graceful lines of the Dome that to this day seems to hang over the city as a crown of beauty; Ghiberti, the creator of the exquisite doors of the Baptistry, work that was the envy of Michael Angelo and Raphael; while among the artists who dwelt within her walls Florence could boast of Uccello, Benozzo Gozzoli, and above all of Fra Angelico, the most spiritual of all painters, whose pictures are like visions of the unseen.

Ten years before the century closed, on March 1, 1390,[1] a child was born in the Via del Cocomero, who was to be a spiritual ornament of his native city, its future archbishop and a canonized saint. He received in the Baptistry the name of Antony, but was universally known

[1] At that time, and until 1749, the year began in Florence on March 25, so that the date of his birth is often given as March 1, 1389.

as Antoninus. Custom has prevailed, and though Antony is his name in the Bull of Canonization, Antoninus is the only one by which he is known. His father, Nicolas Pierozzi, was a well-known citizen, a member, and four times the president of the most honourable guild of the city, that of the judges and notaries. Some, however, declare that Pierozzi was his grandfather, and Nicolas Forcizlioni his father. His mother's name was Thomasa Nucci.

In fixing the date of his birth and death in our minds, it is useful to remember that he was born in the reign of our English king Richard II., lived during the reigns of Henry IV. and V., and died while Henry VI. was on the throne. Urban VI. was Pope when St. Antoninus was born. He therefore lived during the melancholy times of the great Western Schism. St. Catharine of Siena died ten years before his birth, and he was nineteen years old when St. Vincent Ferrer died, though whether he knew him personally does not appear, and is less likely, seeing that St. Vincent was a Spaniard and only preached in the obedience of Avignon. Born in the reign of Pope Urban VI., St. Antoninus lived through the Pontificates of Boniface IX., Innocent VII., Alexander V., John XXIII., Martin V., Eugenius IV., Nicholas V., Calixtus III., and died in the reign of Pius II., Æneas Silvius Piccolomini, in 1459. He had been dead forty-five years when St. Pius V. was born, and therefore among the canonized saints of the Dominican Order he stands between St. Vincent Ferrer and St. Pius.

Not much is recorded of the early life of the Saint. All we are told is that he showed from the first the best natural inclinations, and was known as a gentle, modest, docile youth, with much attraction to piety and study. Idleness was his detestation, vain pleasures he fled from, and he loved holy reading of all kinds, especially about the triumphs of the martyrs. Even in his boyhood he showed a remarkable love of prayer, and astonished every one by the perseverance with which he remained on his knees before the altar or the crucifix. His favourite church as a youth was that of St. Michael, where he loved to prostrate himself before a crucifix that was held in special veneration. It was at the foot of

this crucifix that he is said to have made a vow of virginity, and kneeling before it he drank deeply of the waters of true wisdom from the fountains of the Saviour.

His diligence in study was second only to his piety. Having a quick mind and a retentive memory, joined with good reasoning powers, his masters saw in him at an early age the makings of a learned man.

The story of his reception among the Dominican Fathers at the age of fifteen proves that this praise is not exaggerated. At this time Blessed John Dominici was preaching in Florence, and founding the convent of Fiesole, not far from the city. His sermons made a great sensation among all classes, and drew many young generous souls into the cloister, and Antoninus, though then only a boy of fourteen, felt intensely desirous to become a Dominican. He went to Fiesole and begged to be received into the noviciate. Father John Dominici, being a man of penetration, saw at once that his visitor, mere child though he was, possessed unusual gifts, and yet he seemed so frail that he feared the austerities of the rule, which was carried out very rigorously in the reformed convent of Fiesole, would be too severe for the boy. But not liking to refuse his earnest request too abruptly, he asked him what he was then studying. "Canon Law," answered the youth. "Well, then," replied the Prior, "when you can recite by heart the Decree of Gratian, I will give you the habit of religion."

This was meant as a refusal, but was not so understood by the young postulant. He set to work at once with superhuman diligence, and about a year afterwards presented himself again before Father John Dominici, and once more asked for the habit, as he had fulfilled the required condition and knew Gratian by heart. Father John was incredulous, but to his astonishment found that it was true. Now, Gratian's work is a bulky volume forming a collection of laws and decrees. Gratian was a Benedictine, and wrote his compilation on Canon Law in the twelfth century. Nothing could be more dry and unattractive, especially to a boy; but in twelve months, by dint of incessant labour, Antoninus had analyzed, understood, and learnt by heart this long work. Truly a prodigious feat, and the Prior was speechless with

astonishment. During the process of canonization witnesses affirmed under oath the truth of this story, and among them was Jerome Benzi, who had learnt it from Father Santès Schiattesi, a disciple of St. Antoninus, and his successor as Prior of St. Mark's in Florence.

After this, what could Father John say? The condition had been fulfilled, the impossible had been achieved, and he must keep his promise. He gave the habit, therefore, to Antoninus on the 4th of August, 1404 (or 1405), after the ceremony of the consecration of the new church at Fiesole by the Bishop, James Altoviti, himself a Dominican.

Immediately after his clothing he was sent to Cortona, where the noviciate had been established, and where he had the advantage of being trained by a Saint, for Blessed Laurence of Ripafratta was the Master of Novices, who welcomed him. Two of his companions in the noviciate were Blessed Peter de Tiferno, beatified by Pius IX., and Blessed Fra Angelico de Fiesole.

He was professed in his sixteenth year, on August 4, 1405 (or 1406), and returned at once to Fiesole, where he went through his studies of philosophy and theology, and was ordained priest, but in what year is not recorded.

On February 1, 1413 (or 1414), he was at Fiesole, as we gather from a clause in his father's will ordering his third wife, Alessandra, to give every December a dinner in the house in the Via Cucumero to twelve poor men, and to invite Antoninus from Fiesole. The will must have been dated February 1, 1413, and so proves where his son then was.

A pretty story is related to show the sympathy of his heart for all in distress. As a young religious he was walking with a companion towards Florence, when they came across a little girl weeping bitterly over the fragments of a broken water vessel, and afraid to encounter the maternal wrath at home. Father Antoninus, we are told, finding the little one inconsolable, put the pieces together, prayed earnestly for a few moments, and then restored her the vessel whole and intact, sending her home with a light heart and cheerful face.

After his ordination his fervour was an example to the most advanced. His desire of penance was so insatiable

that his superiors were obliged to restrain and regulate it instead of exhorting him to its practice. Even when sick, if possible, he slept on the floor, and his companions used to say that he seemed to forget that he had a body, so exclusively did he consider his soul.

Study was his delight. After the midnight office in choir, he was accustomed to spend the quiet hours of the night in prayer and study until the morning. If overcome by sleep, he used to lean his head for a short time against the wall and then resume his study or writing.

In the preface to his great work on Moral Theology, he speaks himself about this indefatigable zeal for learning. Quoting the words of Solomon (Proverbs vi. 6) "Go to the ant, O sluggard, consider her ways and be wise," he compares himself to the ant. "How hard and constant is the labour of the ant to provide itself with food! I also have toiled during many years and have often been interrupted by business affairs, which, though often unimportant, have still necessarily claimed my attention. Sometimes my studies have been interrupted for months together on account of the duties of the offices I have held, and I have had to steal time from the hours in which I ought to have been resting." He then gives a long list of authors whose works he had read, pen in hand, and they include many Fathers of the Church, as well as various theologians, and books in canon law, history, and other subjects. It is wonderful how he managed to read and study and write so much, considering on the one side his devotion to prayer, and on the other the constant occupations of his many and various active duties.

Besides the ordinary duties of the choir, Antoninus had the habit of reciting the Office of the Blessed Virgin as well as the Litanies, and on feast days it was his custom to recite the whole Psalter of 150 psalms. Twice in the week he said the Office of the Dead.

In 1406 he lost, to his grief, his master, friend and guide, Father, now Blessed, Dominici, whom the Pope made Archbishop of Ragusa. The work of re-establishing the Order in Florence, that Father John Dominici had so happily begun, was carried out by St. Antoninus, and

more even by his example than by words of instruction. He showed himself a perfect model of religious life, and the sweetness of his character combined with the wisdom of his counsel gave him an immense influence over his fellow religious. Often was he either appointed or elected Prior, the first convent over which he ruled being the important one of Sta Maria sopra Minerva in Rome. No details of his term of office are preserved except the interesting fact that he solemnly removed the relics of St. Catharine of Siena to the altar of our Lady with much ceremonial. He was at the same time appointed by the Pope to the office of Auditor of the Rota, and while acting in this capacity was able to introduce some salutary reforms.

After his term of office in Rome, he became Prior in succession at Naples, Sessa, Gaeta, Siena, Fabriano, Cortona, Fiesole, and afterwards at St. Mark's in Florence, of which he may rightly be called the founder, as he was the first Prior. This convent, so well known to the world through the frescoes of Fra Angelico and the history of Savonarola, was founded in 1436. For many years it had been found most inconvenient for the Fathers of the reformed congregation, of which St. Antoninus was now the head, not to have a home in the city of Florence. Cosmo de Medici, who in 1434 had gained supreme authority in the city, loved and admired the Saint, the people delighted in his sermons and continually sought his advice, so that at last it was arranged that the friars should have the Church of St. George across the Arno. Even this was not found sufficiently central. At St. Mark's there then dwelt a few old religious of the Order of St. Silvester, but the church was poor, the neighbourhood populous, and the old religious unable to attend to the spiritual wants of the people. It was therefore proposed that the Dominicans and Silvestrians should change places, and this was arranged with the sanction of Pope Eugenius, in 1436. The friars of St. Dominic in solemn procession went to St. Mark's, and Father Cyprian of Florence took possession of it in the name of the Master General.

St. Antoninus was appointed first Superior of the new

convent, which thus became one of the convents of the reformed congregation begun by Blessed John Dominici and Blessed Laurence of Ripafratta. The object of this congregation, which included convents belonging to the province of Rome and Sicily, was to repair some of the evils caused by the terrible scourge called the Black Death. This fearful plague had carried off nearly all the members of the Order. Some convents were completely emptied of their inhabitants, and afterwards men were admitted without much sign of vocation or training. Woeful relaxation was the bitter consequence, and Blessed John Dominici had founded his congregation with observance of the ancient discipline in primitive severity. St. Antoninus became a pillar of strength in this good work, and applied himself with praiseworthy care to the work of consolidating, extending, and perfecting all the good effected by his predecessors.

As first Prior of St. Mark's he had to begin well and to form holy traditions, a most important matter, as good discipline will seldom rise higher than its fount. The Church and convent were rebuilt by the architect Michelozzi, who was appointed by Cosmo de Medici, but St. Antoninus superintended everything down to the least detail, so that all might be in accordance with the requirements of the rule and the spirit of poverty. He dispensed with all unnecessary ornament in the construction, though he showed his appreciation of Christian art by causing the saintly Fra Angelico of Fiesole to ornament the walls with his heavenly pictures. Two cells in St. Mark's were reserved for Cosmo de Medici, and so much did he love St. Antoninus that he often made long visits to the convent, although the Prior was accustomed to speak with perfect freedom when he thought reproof was needed.

Cosmo loved art, and the magnificently illuminated choir books of St. Mark's were his gift. He also established a library for the religious, and a free library for the public in the shape of a large hall furnished with four hundred volumes left to the city by Niccolo Niccoli.

As Vicar General of the whole congregation and Prior of St. Mark's, Antoninus was a model of humility to all. No one ever carried out more literally the words of our

Lord, "He that is greater among you, let him become as the younger, and he that is the leader as he that serveth" (St. Luke xxii. 26). He loved the humblest duties, washing the dishes and helping the lay brothers in their work. One day as he was sweeping the cloister, a religious of another Order arrived to consult him. Without ceasing his work Antoninus looked at him, and before he had time to put his question answered it in these words, "Return to your own brethren, and be sure that you have a true vocation to the religious life."

To a penitent in the confessional the unsatisfactory state of whose soul was visible to him, he gave this advice: "Go home and say three times to yourself in the presence of God these words, 'One day I came into this world, one day also must I leave it by death.'" True conversion was the result.

Even the elements obeyed his voice. On one occasion when at some distance from Florence with the novices for a recreation, a severe thunderstorm threatened to prevent their return. In the worst part of the storm the Prior knelt in prayer and made the sign of the cross towards the clouds, and, by the power of Him who had stilled the sea, there was a great calm.

Pope Eugenius commanded Antoninus to attend the General Council of Florence as a theologian, and in this capacity he was present at all the sessions, and was engaged in all the discussions which ended in the much desired but only temporary union of the schismatic Greek Church with the Holy See. Blessed Peter de Jeremia and seven other Dominicans were also present at the Council.

Besides these labours Antoninus, as Vicar General of his congregation, was constantly employed in visiting the various convents under his charge, a duty that implied many long and fatiguing journeys on foot. He also busied himself in many good works for the benefit of Florence, and with Father Gomez, a Benedictine, was one of the chief supporters of the four companies of catechists which had been founded by the city authorities for the instruction of the young. He was also the founder of a charitable work which still remains after four centuries, the object of which was to find out and

aid those who, like the man in the gospel, could say, "to dig I am not able, to beg I am ashamed." Political troubles caused this class of persons to be particularly numerous in Florence at that time, and many most distressing cases of hidden destitution were discovered and relieved without any injury to the feelings of the sufferers.

In spite of all his labours, the fervour of his spirit was so great that he persisted in fasting rigorously even when travelling on foot in cold or otherwise trying weather. These fatigues caused him much suffering, in which he rejoiced. Like other saints, as his bodily powers were weakened, his spirit seemed to gather strength and his soul was more and more filled "as with marrow and fatness, and his mouth was more ready to praise God with joyful lips" (Psa. lxii. 6). God always seemed to lift him above his trials, and though his body was exhausted, his virtue was purified, his faithfulness tested, and his service of God and the Church more amply extended.

The Archbishopric of Florence was left vacant by the death of Zabarella of Padua, and Pope Eugenius was most anxious to select a worthy pastor for so important a see. Many began to intrigue in favour of their own friends, and the authorities of the city demanded a man of virtue, experience and learning, and if possible one of their own citizens who could understand the people and their wants.

Eugenius was perplexed, and a delay of nine months occurred. Fra Angelico was in Rome, employed in his art, and one day the Holy Father complained, in familiar conversation with him, of the difficulty he experienced in selecting the right man to be Archbishop of Florence. "They want a citizen of their own, a man holy, learned and experienced," said the Pope, "but who is there combining these various qualities?" "Does not your holiness find them all united in the person of our Fra Antonino of Florence, Prior of St. Mark's?" replied Angelico. Scales seemed to fall from the eyes of the Pope. He was surprised and half ashamed not to have thought of him before. However, without loss of time, he nominated him to fill the vacant post, and Florence rejoiced

at the appointment. None could have been more popular. Antoninus alone was full of astonishment, fear and grief.

He was absent from home at the time, making visitations, and when the rumour reached his ears he determined not to continue his journey towards Florence, but to go aside along the coast of Tuscany, intending to fly into the island of Sardinia, and to remain there concealed till an archbishop had been consecrated. One of his nephews, however, joined him and tried to persuade him to go to Florence. Though unable to influence his uncle he gained the ear of the Dominican who travelled with him, and with his assistance managed to induce Antoninus to remain for the present in Siena.

From Siena he wrote sorrowful letters to the Pope, begging him for the love of God not to lay such an immense burden upon his weak shoulders. He represented that he was already in his fifty-seventh year, with his health much weakened and his strength failing. In fact he pleaded all that humility could suggest, and implored Eugenius not to act as his enemy now, after having so long been his friend. His letter was stained with his tears.

The Pope, however, was inflexible, and ordered Antoninus to go at once to Fiesole, at the same time writing to the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of Florence to declare that as he had sent the future Archbishop to their gates, they must manage the rest themselves. The principal clergy and the senate, with Cosmo de Medici at their head, went to Fiesole as a deputation to press him to accept the office, while he, in his turn, used every argument to induce them to petition the Pope for a more worthy archbishop. Cosmo at last, moved by the grief of his old friend, promised to send dispatches to the Pope, which he did, but accompanied with another private letter begging his holiness to stand firm.

Eugenius answered by sending the bull of appointment, together with a threat of excommunication if he refused to obey the will of God made known to him by the Vicar of Christ. This obliged him to yield, and calling a large number of ecclesiastics and laymen to

meet him at Fiesole, he declared before them that he accepted the position thus forced upon him. "God, who knows the heart," he declared with tears he could not restrain, "will bear me witness that I have never desired this office, and that I only accept it in obedience to the will of God and the command of the Church." Thus, as his office expresses it, was he dragged to the archbishopric as if to the rack or the cross.

His consecration took place in March, 1446, in the Church of St. Dominic at Fiesole, Laurence Bishop of Achaïa, assisted by the bishops of Fiesole and Pistoia, being the consecrating prelate.

On the second Sunday in Lent, accompanied by a large number of Dominican Fathers, he left Fiesole, said Mass in the church of San Gallo, near the gate of Florence, and then in solemn procession entered the city, not on a gaily caparisoned horse, but on foot, and with a sad and anxious countenance. The people crowded around, shouting aloud with joy, prostrating themselves for his blessing, kissing his hands and vestments, and welcoming him as an angel from heaven.

Pope Eugenius had indeed great reason to thank God for providing so holy an archbishop. The bishop of Bologna who afterwards became Pope by the name of Nicolas IV., used to relate that he had often heard Eugenius say: "Though the appointment of bishops is so responsible a matter, there are at least three men whose promotion never makes me feel uneasy. I mean the patriarch of Venice, Laurence Justinian; the bishop of Ferrara, John da Tossignano; and Antoninus, archbishop of Florence." While the last is a canonized saint, the two others have been beatified.

In his last illness Pope Eugenius proved his admiration for St. Antoninus by sending for him to Rome, making his last confession to him, and receiving from his hands the holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction. He died on February 23, 1447. St. Antoninus loved and venerated his memory, and in his writings often praised his virtues and eminent gifts.

As he was consecrated in 1446 and died in 1459, St. Antoninus was archbishop for thirteen years, and it is

necessary to compress into less than that number of pages some account of his public actions and of the virtues of his private life.

The hopes of all good men when he was appointed to this exalted and difficult post rose very high on account of the proofs he had already abundantly given, as Provincial of the Dominicans, of wisdom, prudence, and zeal, combined with inflexible firmness on the side of right, ever tempered with sweetness and tender mercy towards the weakness of others. But, writes an ancient and contemporary historian, though the hopes of all were so great, the result not only justified but far surpassed the most sanguine expectations.

In his own personal life he changed little or nothing. He lived with the simplicity and self-denial he had practised as a friar. Far from self-indulgence or display, his table, his bed, his clothes, the furniture of his rooms, were so simple as barely to supply what was strictly necessary, and his maxim was that to follow the holy prelates of primitive Christian times in their imitation of Jesus Christ, the only riches of a bishop ought to be virtue. Though doing nothing that interfered with the duties of his office, he endeavoured as far as possible to make his archiepiscopal palace like a religious house and instead of lowering his dignity, he thus in reality, exalted it.

His household consisted of only six persons, whom he was careful to pay well in order to take away all excuse for receiving bribes or making exactions. In temporal concerns he entrusted all to one man of approved honour and skill; for spiritual matters he at first employed two Vicars-General, but afterwards, to insure unity, one, but to most matters of administration regarding religious concerns he diligently attended himself.

His charity to the poor was heroic. He was their father, protector and advocate. Their father, for he considered all he had as bishop to belong to his children, the poor. He forbade his servants to send any one away empty-handed, and when his purse and stores were exhausted he bestowed in alms his furniture, clothes, and all he possessed. No vessel of silver was found in his house, no horse in his stables. One mule given him by the Dominican Fathers formed his episcopal equipage,

and this beast several times sold that the price might be given to the poor, was bought back by some rich man of Florence and returned to the Archbishop.

As protector of the poor he considered their cause his own, and defended them from all unjust oppression, and as their advocate he pleaded their cause with the rich, when his own resources had failed and his revenues had all been distributed, and thus obtained for those ashamed to beg ample and continuous relief.

An amusing story is related which shows that prudence in almsgiving was as necessary then as now, and that human nature was as selfish then as in our own day. Being asked by a poor gentleman for a dowry sufficient to marry his two daughters, the holy prelate, not having sufficient for the purpose, advised him devoutly to visit the Church of the Annunziata, and our Lady would provide. She did, in the following way. The gentleman was saying his prayers, when he overheard a conversation near him between two blind men who imagined they were alone in the church and began comparing notes as to their gains. "I have two hundred golden crowns sewn into my cap," said one, grinning. "And I," chuckled the other, "have three hundred under the lining of my hat!" Indignant at this imposition on the charitable, the gentleman approached stealthily, and whipped off the cap and the hat and took them both, with their owners, to Antoninus, the father of the poor. The two men were severely reprimanded for depriving the really poor by collecting alms they did not need, and giving the first twenty-five and the other thirty crowns, he bestowed the rest on the poor gentleman as a dowry for his daughters.

On the choir stalls in St. Dominic's Church, London, on the left hand, or Gospel side, of the altar, may be seen the figure of an archbishop with a mitre on his head, and in his hands a pair of scales. That is St. Antoninus, and the story that gives him that art sign is the following. A man had supplied the Saint with some article of food, to whom the servant of God replied, "Deo gratias!" The man was rather discontented not to receive some material payment: calling him, the Saint wrote the words "Deo gratias" on paper, and putting the food in the opposite scale, the paper weighed it down!

Charitable, compassionate, and tender-hearted as Antoninus was, he could be firm, and even severe, when it was necessary in his pastoral office. He could use his staff not only to guide but to chastise. As an instance, it is related that on one occasion when Francis of Padua, Treasurer of Eugenius IV., afterwards Bishop of Ferrara, was in Florence, the Senate cast him into prison. The Saint complained of this violation of his rights, and words being of no avail, he put the city under interdict, and issued canonical censures against the magistrates. When they threatened to drive him from the city, he calmly showed them the key of his cell in the Dominican convent of Fiesole, a haven of rest after the tumult of the city. On another occasion he obliged the members of the Supreme Council of the Republic to submit to a public penance for infringing the rights of the Church.

Every Sunday and holy day the Archbishop preached the word of God to large crowds, who delighted in his words, and remarkable conversions were the common result of his zeal. Before preaching he prayed long and fervently. Many flagrant abuses and public scandals were ended by his efforts, and many salutary reforms began, while so great was his reputation for wisdom that not only his own people but learned men of other places, magistrates and governors, bishops and cardinals, and the Vicar of Christ himself, constantly asked his advice in difficulties of all kinds. He was eminent as a canonist and theologian, and his character for fearless integrity, as well as luminous intellect and prudence of judgment, brought him the name of "The Angel of Counsel."

Florence during his time was visited by the three scourges that we pray in the Litany to be delivered from, pestilence, famine, and earthquake. During these afflictions he was the father of all, and made superhuman exertions to help the suffering. During the plague he excited the zeal of the Dominicans of St. Mark, of St. Maria Novella, and Fiesole, and sent them to administer the holy sacraments to the dying, and afterwards he petitioned the General for other fathers, as about four hundred Fathers had died martyrs of charity. Famine followed and destructive earthquakes, and in September

of 1353 a storm of almost unexampled violence that devastated the country. Not content to pray for the suffering people, the Archbishop laboured in every way to help them and repair their losses.

One of his ecclesiastics was not ashamed to enrich himself by gambling. On his guilty head came down the thunder of the Archbishop's righteous indignation. His gains were confiscated and distributed in alms to the poor. Sometimes his sentences gave offence and were appealed against, but Nicolas V. had such entire confidence in the justice of a man so enlightened and disinterested that he forbade any appeals to be received in Rome from the decisions of the Archbishop of Florence.

In the midst of these cares of office his support and refreshment was found in prayer. He passed long hours in conversation with God, and never gave any decision without begging for light from on high. Once he was advised to shorten the time he devoted to prayer, and with kindling eye he replied, "Never could I sustain the heavy burden of the episcopate, if I had not that place of repose," pointing at the same time to his private chapel where dwelt his Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Many times was he found rapt in contemplation and lifted in body above the ground before his crucifix, speaking with words of burning love to his suffering Master.

At first he used to recite the midnight office at home with the priests of his household, but hearing that there was some want of regularity in the attendance of the canons at the cathedral, he began at once to go every night himself in all weathers. One wintry night when it was raining very hard he resisted those who entreated him to absent himself that one night, and in reward no drop of rain fell upon him.

So evident was the holiness of the Archbishop that Nicolas V., in speaking one day of the canonization of St. Bernardine of Siena, the Franciscan apostle of Italy, went so far as to say that there would be little difficulty in declaring Antoninus worthy of the same honour, even before his death.

Pope Calixtus, who had succeeded Nicolas V., died after a short reign of three years and four months in 1458,

and was succeeded by the famous Cardinal of Siena, under the title of Pius II. After his election the Florentines, according to custom, selected some of their most distinguished citizens as an embassy to the new Pope, conveying their homage and congratulations. St. Antoninus was the chief of these ambassadors, and as several affairs of importance had to be negotiated, his presence and influence were highly valued on both sides. Indeed, Pius II. not only held him in singular veneration, but was an intimate personal friend, and received him with every mark of distinction and affection. "I was myself a witness," writes an ancient biographer of the Saint, "of the marks of honour and the extreme joy with which the Supreme Council of Florence received him on his return home, when he gave them a full account of what passed in Rome between the Pope and him."

One of the latest public actions of St. Antoninus was to preach in Tuscany a crusade against the advancing power of the Turks. Happily for Christendom, the Sultan cannot now threaten to invade Europe. But in the fifteenth century there was terrible danger. The growing power of the Turks, who had easily swept away the feeble resistance of the eastern emperor, then seriously menaced Europe. The Popes at once saw the danger, and did all in their power to rouse the Christian people before it was too late. In 1403, the Sultan Bajazet I., after overrunning the provinces of the eastern empire, had laid siege to Constantinople, and though he was defeated and made prisoner by Tamerlane, the conqueror of Persia and India, the fate of the doomed city was only postponed, for it was taken by the Turks under Mahomet II. in 1453 and, to the disgrace of Europe, still remains under their hateful sway. Constantine Palæologus was thus the last eastern emperor, and by 1458 Greece fell entirely under the Mahommedan yoke. This was the very year of the election of Pius II., and he exhorted all the Christian world to arise from sleep and oppose the Turks. His foresight was seen to be justified by the event, for in 1480 the Turks penetrated into Italy itself, and to the terror of all Europe took Otranto.

St. Antoninus, fully sharing the apprehensions of the

Popes, had exerted himself in the time of Calixtus to preach the crusade against the infidels, calling other Dominican preachers to his aid, among whom Father John of Naples and Father Julien Lapaccini were conspicuous. He himself, though old and infirm, went round the Tuscan towns and castles calling upon all to enrol themselves under the standard of the cross for the defence of Christianity and of Europe. The clergy subscribed more than thirty thousand florins of gold for the support of the crusaders. When all was ready the holy Archbishop went to Leghorn to bless the departure of the expedition, and ordered public prayers in all the churches of Florence. More than six thousand people, men, women and children, all displaying on white garments the sign of the cross, took part in the solemn procession, begging God to avert the awful catastrophe which threatened Europe. On July 22, 1456, the Turks were routed before Belgrade, the first real check to their advance.

Again did St Antoninus stir up the faith and valour of the people, that the success might be followed up and the power of the enemy crushed. On April 25, 1459, only a month before St. Antoninus died, Pius II. entered Florence on his way to Mantua, where he was to organize the crusade. The Pope and Cardinals did everything possible to show their veneration for the Archbishop, now worn out more by labour than years. Some one had the indiscretion to remark in his presence that all this respect proved what high esteem the Vicar of Christ had for his holiness, considering him to be a Saint. Alarmed by this flattery, the holy man replied with much animation, "The Saints are in heaven; and we, poor sinners, are still on earth!"

The papal court was still in Florence when the Archbishop died and joined the Saints in heaven. Before the end of April he was weakened by attacks of fever, and ordered to a country place on the hills near Florence for change of air. On the 1st of May, the Feast of the holy Apostles St. Philip and St. James, he was so much worse that he received with the utmost joy the sacraments of the Church, the Viaticum and Extreme Unction. The time so much longed for had at last arrived. How

often must he have said, in the prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas, "Soul of Christ sanctify me," already indulgenced, that petition, "At the hour of my death call me," and now Jesus Christ had given him a loving call to his true home.

After the reception of the holy sacraments, his first thoughts were for his beloved poor. He ordered that everything to be found in his episcopal palace should be distributed among them; but such was his love of poverty that they could find no more than four ducats.

He then declared that his last wish was to be buried with his brethren in the Church of St. Mark. Jerome Savonarola, who was afterwards to make that convent so famous for ever, was then a child of seven, living in Ferrara. The friars of St. Mark's, hearing that the Archbishop, their beloved father, was actually dying, came at once to assist him, and standing as in choir on the two sides of his bed, they at his request recited Matins. When beginning Lauds, the Saint himself with a clear voice said, "Deus in adjutorium meum intende" ("O God, come to my assistance"), to which the friars, with tears in their eyes and with difficulty suppressing their sobs of grief, replied, "Domine ad adjuvandum me festina" ("O Lord, make haste to help me"), and then all bowed down in adoration as they recited what was so appropriate at that solemn moment, the "Glory be to the Father," &c.

After the Office, they recited the prayers for a departing soul, and the Psalter, during which the dying saint often said, in honour of the Queen of Heaven, "Sancta et immaculata Virginitas, quibus Te laudibus efferam, nescio" ("Holy and immaculate Virginity, with what words to praise Thee, I know not"). Often also did he repeat with radiant joy his favourite ejaculation, "Servire Deo, regnare est" ("To serve God is to reign").

In saying the Psalter the religious had now reached —whether for the first time is not recorded—the 24th Psalm, beginning with the words, "To Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. In Thee, O my God, I put my trust, let me not be put to shame," and coming to the fifteenth verse, they said, "Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord." On hearing these words the dying man

lifted his eyes and hands upwards towards heaven and repeated them himself, adding the rest of the verse, "for He shall pluck my feet out of the snare." These were his last words. A few moments afterwards he lovingly kissed the crucifix offered to him, and calmly breathed out his soul to God.

It was the 2nd of May, 1459. At the same instant, Blessed Constantine de Fabriano was favoured in his convent at Ascoli with a vision in which he saw the soul entering heaven.

At once God sealed the universal opinion of his sanctity by the sanction of miracles. All the citizens mourned, and the poor shed many bitter tears. Pope Pius II. determined to honour the funeral with his presence, and published an indulgence of seven years, to be gained by visiting the sacred remains. His body was carried from the cathedral to the Church of St. Mark with the utmost solemnity, and there lay unburied for eight days. He was canonized in November, 1523, by Clement VII., sixty-four years after his death. In 1559, just a century after his death, his body was found totally incorrupt, and was translated from the first grave and deposited under an altar in a chapel of St. Mark's Church that had been specially prepared for it.

Pius II. wrote of him as follows:—

"Antoninus, of the Order of Friars-Preachers, slept in the Lord, leaving behind him the odour of virtue. Avarice he overcame, pride he trampled under foot, sensuality was to him unknown. Most sparing was he in food and drink; he gave way neither to anger, envy, nor to any other passion. As a theologian he shone, and wrote many volumes esteemed by the learned. As a preacher he was loved by the people, although he boldly denounced sin, and reformed the manners both of clergy and laymen. He was a diligent peacemaker, and as far as possible cast all strife out of the city. The revenue of his see he distributed to the poor of Christ, and after his death only a poor mule and a little indifferent furniture was found in his possession. All else had been given to the poor. All in the city rightly thought that he had passed to the life of the blessed."

The principal books written by St. Antoninus are,

first, a large work on theology called *A Sum of Moral Theology*, divided into three parts. Second, a Chronicle, in three parts, of all the chief events of the history of the world, as far the indefatigable industry of the writer could collect them, up to 1458, the year before his death. His object was to show his readers the wisdom of God's providence in the history of the world, and to raise their minds in gratitude to Him. He also composed several lesser works, many of which have been frequently printed in Italy, France, and Germany. Amongst others there is one called *How to Live Well*, addressed to a lady living in the world, and full of good advice suited to her state of life. It is written in Italian. Another work, written also in Italian, contains instructions on Prayer, on the Commandments, and on Christian consolation.

The following antiphons and prayer are from the office of his feast, the tenth of May :—

O virgin, O doctor, O watchful and good shepherd! our sighs and prayers despise not: but receive into thy pitying heart those who praise thee. Alleluia.

Another antiphon alludes to Job xxix. 15 :—

I was a father to the poor; I was eyes to the blind and feet was I to the lame.

Great in humility, rich in poverty, in the body an angel: O blessed Antoninus, pray for us, we beseech thee.

Pray for us, O holy Antoninus,

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

May we be helped, O Lord, by the merits of Saint Antoninus, Thy Confessor and Bishop; that as we proclaim Thee to be wonderful in him, so we may glory in Thy mercy towards us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ST. PETER FOURIER[1]

(1565–1640)

BY THE VERY REV. A. ALLARIA, D.D.

In the merciful designs of Divine Providence, by a solemn Decree of the Sovereign Pontiff, there was canonized on May 27, 1897, a man whose life was spent in promoting Christian education, chiefly among the poor. This man was Peter Fourier, a Canon Regular of Lorraine, who, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, founded the first Congregation devoted to the free daily education of poor girls. To all those who are interested in the cause of Christian education a short biography of such a man may prove of great interest.

Fourier was also a true reformer. Raised by God, he did in Lorraine what the Venerable Charles Faure and the Venerable Alan de Solminiac were at the same time doing in other parts of France; he

[1] The materials for this biography have been derived from the following works: *La vie du Tres Reverend Père Pierre Fourier dit vulgairement, Le Père de Mattaincourt*, par le R. P. Jean Bèdel; *Idea Boni Parochi et Perfecti religiosi, Life of Blessed Peter Fourier*, translated from the French of E. de Bazelaire; *Histoire du B. Pierre Fourier*, par M. l'Abbé Chapia *Alix le Clerc, dite en religion Mère Thérèse de Jesus.*

cleansed the monasteries of the Canons Regular from those defilements which the laxity of the age had introduced even into the sanctuary. The admirable manner in which he effected this reform, and the excellent Constitutions he composed for his reformed brethren, would be sufficient to proclaim him a great man. Nor was this all. His great virtue and character shone even more in the humble and laborious office of a village parish priest. It was in the discharge of the pastoral office that he showed that versatility of genius and truly remarkable Christian philanthropy which gained for him that sweet appellation, by which he is still almost exclusively known in those parts, "The good Father of Mattaincourt."

Peter Fourier was born on the last day of November, 1565, at Mirecourt, an ancient town of Lorraine. His father, a true patriarch and model of primitive virtue, considered that by the law of primogeniture Peter belonged in an especial manner to God. The youth, giving signs of vocation to the priesthood, was sent, at the age of fifteen, to the University of Pont-à-Mousson, then under the direction of the Jesuits. During the time he spent there he was remarkable alike for his piety and for his literary accomplishments. So great was his reputation even then that, at the request of many noble families, he opened a school at Mirecourt.

But Peter Fourier was not destined to live in the world. At the age of twenty we find him at the gates of the Abbey of Chaumousey, founded in 1094 for Canons Regular of St. Augustine, by Sehérus d'Epinal. In this Abbey Fourier received the religious habit, and, having edified his brethren by his irreproachable life and austerity, he made his solemn profession in 1587. On February 25, 1589, he was

ordained priest at Trèves, but his great humility would not suffer him to celebrate the Divine Mysteries for some months.

After his ordination Fourier returned, by order of his superiors, to the University of Pont-à-Mousson, to finish his theological studies. Here he developed an extraordinary ability for the study of patristic theology, and became so proficient in that science that in after years he would often quote by heart long extracts from St. Basil, St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine, and St. Gregory. His knowledge of the Angelic Doctor was so profound, that his companions were wont to say that, should the *Summa* of St. Thomas be lost, it could be restored by Peter Fourier.

At the end of six years Peter was recalled by the Abbot to his monastery, where for some time he lived an austere and mortified life. But his friends were desirous of seeing him engaged in the active duties of pastoral care. Three parishes served from the Abbey were offered to him. He then consulted his spiritual guide, Father John Fourier, a Jesuit, as to the choice he should make. And the answer was: "If you seek riches and honour, choose either Nommeny or St. Martin of Pont-à-Mousson; but if arduous labour without any human recompense will satisfy you, then accept Mattaincourt." Without a moment's hesitation, with the permission of his Abbot, Fourier accepted the last-named parish, of which he took possession on the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity, in 1597, and began his spiritual ministrations on the Feast of Corpus Christi in the same year.

Mattaincourt, the field of Fourier's pastoral labours for thirty years, is a village about two miles from the town of Mirecourt, in the Vosges, which was then noted for the manufacture of lace and cloth. Even

in our days fine pillow-lace is made by women and girls in almost every cottage. At this time, the frequent intercourse of the people with Switzerland had served to introduce many vices and the germs of Protestantism into the parish, which had acquired the name of "Little Geneva."

But soon a change took place and a moral revolution was accomplished. By his instructions, patience, example, and continual prayer the holy priest rooted out every disorder, and religion was restored. His love for his parishioners is well expressed in his own words. Writing to his friends, he says: "You can never know the depth of the love which a priest bears towards his children until you become a priest yourself." No wonder that his spiritual children loved him in return; and we are told that, whenever he came back from some journey, his parishioners went in a body to meet him and to escort him home with rejoicings.

Although Fourier watched over the spiritual welfare of the souls committed to his care, yet he did not neglect their temporal prosperity. Our Saint had a creative and organizing mind for all the needs of his people. But as Bèdel, his pupil, confidant, and biographer, tells us, "He had an especial compassion for those tradesmen who, by misfortune in business, robberies, or other causes not in their own power to prevent, had fallen from abundance into a state of want. For their benefit he founded a fund which he called, after the Patron Saint of the parish, 'St. Evre's Purse,' into which he placed all the pious legacies left at his disposal, fines, and other sums. When any one of his parishioners was in arrears and could prove his difficulties, a few hundred francs were given to him from this fund, in

order to enable him to continue his trade. The only condition attached to this grant was that it should be repaid if the receiver were to become rich. This scheme answered so well that with this money a fund was established, the interest of which was applied to a similar purpose." Thus in the beginning of the seventeenth century the creative mind of Fourier had already established what, in our day, we should call benefit societies, savings banks, or similar associations.

Fourier himself, whilst he was generous with the indigent, led a life temperate, poor, and mortified to the extreme. "He never," writes his disciple and biographer, "had any fire in his house, not even in winter, except in case of sickness, or the reception of some person of distinction. He let a barn, attached to the rectory, to a poor woman, who discharged her rent in cooking the simple food of the Father. He only had a bed for show, as he never used it, but took his rest upon a wooden bench, a foot-and-a-half wide. In order that every person might easily approach him, he stood before the door of his house and remained there, sometimes for two hours, in the depth of winter. One consulted him about a lawsuit, another about a journey he was going to make, a third upon his wants; and whilst he imparted advice and comfort to all, he suffered the most severe pains, and his feet were often quite frozen—the effects of which troubled him for some years afterwards. With the exception of the little needed for his own sustenance, Fourier gave the whole of his substance to the poor, whom he told never to be ashamed of asking him for relief, as all that he possessed belonged to them; so that they grew accustomed to ask him for every-

thing they wanted. Sometimes it was money for butter, or for milk for a child; and no applicant was ever refused, God multiplying the means. He informed himself of the way each one earned his livelihood, what profit he made on his wares, and the rest, in order to find out the bashful poor. . . . He would often procure delicacies for the poor and infirm, and he continually visited them, served them, and watched whole nights at their bedsides."

But if the holy parish priest was all heart and tenderness towards those who were in need, he could also be firm; and when God's glory demanded, he would show the zeal that consumed his soul. To his title of parish priest was joined that of magistrate. This authority he used to correct disorders and punish those who would not listen to his admonitions, by imposing fines upon the guilty, and applying the sums they received to the relief of the poor.

The better to provide for the spiritual needs of his children, Fourier established in his church three confraternities—that of St. Sebastian for men, that of the Holy Rosary for married women, and that of the Immaculate Conception for the Children of Mary. As a consequence of all these labours and well-regulated zeal, so great was the change that soon took place in the parish of Mattaincourt, that the Bishop expressed the wish to have five such priests in his diocese, one at each corner, and one in the middle.

About a quarter of a mile from Mattaincourt is a hillock overlooking the village across the valley formed by the river Maddon. Tradition relates that the holy parish priest was wont to retire there and pray for his parishioners, at the foot of a young tree which he had planted near to a fountain which

has become celebrated under the name of the "Good Father's spring." On this spot, consecrated by the prayers of Fourier, and visited every year by thousands of pilgrims who come to drink at the "spring," a beautiful little chapel has been erected, and the inhabitants of Mattaincourt consider that their holy pastor still watches over them and their dead who sleep in the adjacent cemetery.

Whilst Peter Fourier was promoting the spiritual and temporal welfare of those who had been committed to his care, his earnest desire was to perpetuate the work of reform which through his labours had been accomplished in his parish. But as his old biographer tells us, he saw that to attain this end the children should be trained under Christian influence from their infancy. The holy man "fasted, kept vigil, prayed, wore a hair-shirt, said mass every day, so that he might obtain from on high a blessing on his labours and the grace of the Holy Spirit, to see the fittest and surest means of happily attaining his object. After much prayer he concluded that there was nothing better to be done, than to take the children in hand, even from the cradle, to keep them carefully from sin, and to bring their hearts under the influence of virtue, as soon as their mothers' milk was denied them, hoping that when the old sinners, who till then filled the land, should die, their place would be taken by children so well nurtured that the world would be changed in fifty years. . . . After many prayers he came to the conclusion that the most advantageous means would be to establish an order in the Church whose chief object should be to break the bread of life to these little ones, impressing on their tender hearts the love of virtue and the horror

of sin." This solemn resolution was taken on the eve of St. Sebastian, January 19, 1598, as we learn from Peter Fourier himself, who kept this anniversary to the end of his life, and in remembrance of this great event, the Canonesses of his Order make a special communion on the same day every year.

There was, however, a great difficulty in the matter ; it was the danger of bringing together the children of both sexes. To avoid this, and to make the work as perfect as possible, he considered it necessary to have a religious order of women for the girls, and one of men for the boys ; who should educate the children gratuitously, so that no child, for want of a halfpenny a week, should be deprived of the benefit of instruction.

Fourier set to work first with the men, "choosing five or six young men," the old biographer tells us, "who had some instruction. These he gathered in the presbytery to instruct and to try what he could make of them. But the time had not yet come, one ran away, another asked to be dismissed, a third became weary of the work, so that in three months they had all disappeared." This part of the work was reserved to another holy priest, Blessed de la Salle, who lived a few years later. Peter's success in his plans for girls surpassed even his expectation. In answer to his prayers, and moved by his earnest exhortations, five young women determined to renounce the world, and to give themselves to the practice of virtue, and good work in labouring for the good of their neighbours, if possible, in some new religious order. Alix le Clerc, twenty years old, was the first who presented herself and manifested her desire to the good father. Four of her companions, Ganthe

André, Claudia Chauvenel, Jane de Louvroir and her sister Isabella, hearing of her determination, made known to the holy pastor their desire to join with Alix. Great was the joy of Fourier, but proceeding slowly and with great precaution, he took time before giving them a definite answer, putting before their minds the many difficulties, and obstacles, which they would have to overcome. Satisfied, at length, that their vocation was true and solid, he allowed them to attend the midnight Mass of Christmas, 1597, dressed in black, and wearing veils, so that the crib of our Saviour was also in a manner, just three hundred years ago, the cradle of the glorious Institute, afterwards, by the sanction of the Holy See, known as the Congregation of Nôtre Dame.

In order that these young postulants might be thoroughly tried and trained for the religious life and for the work they were to undertake, Fourier confided them to the care of Madame d'Apremont, a Canoness of the noble chapter at Poussey, about three miles from Mattaincourt. He visited them often, and after they had been submitted to severe trials, being convinced of their vocation, he gave them some regulations, and with the Bishop's approval, desired them to return to Mattaincourt, where living in the same house, they began to instruct gratuitously the poor girls, as they had previously done at Poussay. Alix le Clerc was named Superior of the little community, which soon began to increase. Girls flocked to their school from the neighbouring villages. Fourier himself took his share in the work of instructing the poor. Mother Angélique, one of the first who joined the little community, relates that their holy

director had an admirable method of instilling into his spiritual daughters a love for the instruction of the young. "When they conversed with him on the subject of their classes, or of the plans they had conceived for the advancement of their pupils, and the inspiring them with a distaste for vanities and dangerous assemblies, he was so pleased, that every one saw that nothing could give him greater pleasure. He occupied himself with the smallest details which regarded their manners. He particularly applied himself to making the religious capable of imparting the necessary instruction to their children. He even went so far as to teach them to read well and correctly, and to give them methods of teaching the principles of orthography, and the rules of arithmetic. Every day they received a short lesson from him."

It was at this time that the zealous parish priest introduced in his church a practice which was the source of many blessings to his people. He composed some dialogues, which treated of the virtues opposed to the vices most common among his parishioners and in the neighbourhood. These dialogues the children were taught to deliver by heart and with grace. Every Sunday, after vespers, he would first teach the Catechism; then the children, who had been instructed by the nuns, would publicly recite the dialogues they had learnt at school. At first the parents came to hear their children; then others, attracted by the novelty, came also. The divine truths delivered through these innocent lips made an impression on hardened hearts; and old sinners, who had been deaf to the eloquent voice of their pastor, were moved and converted by the voice of these young preachers.

The holy Founder, at the outset, solicited the ap-

probation of his Bishop for his new Institute, which was granted after Fourier had explained his plans and eloquently pleaded before a large assembly of learned ecclesiastics and church dignitaries. When, a short time after, it was deemed expedient to found a second house at St. Mihiel, Eric de Lorraine, Bishop of Verdun, had the question of the new Institute again investigated and gave it his sanction. In 1603 the Cardinal of Lorraine, Legate of the Holy See, also approved of it, declaring it to be "most useful at the present time." By Papal Bulls dated 1615 and 1616, Pope Paul V. erected the Institute into a religious order, and by another Bull Pope Urban VIII. in 1628 permitted the nuns to take a fourth vow binding themselves to the gratuitous education of poor children.

"Considering," says the Bull, "that the holy Apostolic See has always had care, with no less wisdom and vigilance than liberality, of the education and instruction of Christian youth . . . but that the public instruction of the young girls has not been yet undertaken in the manner it ought to be, whence it followed that their parents' means being insufficient to meet the expense, the training of women in the paths of virtue seemed to be neglected. . . . We have thought that we should fulfil a duty of our pastoral charge in favouring the designs of virgins offering to Jesus Christ, under the yoke of religion, a holocaust of their chastity, and feeling compassion for the weakness of poor girls, take upon themselves the care of their education. Therefore, having lately been presented with a petition, showing that the Holy See had erected a convent at Nancy . . . and that several Bishops, on their own authority, had established similar

houses . . . in which virgins, full of zeal, advance the public welfare by applying themselves with all possible piety, usefulness, and disinterestedness to the instruction of girls, admitting within their schools the poor, the rich, and the noble, in order to train them to live worthily and honestly, but especially omitting nothing to preserve these tender children in all innocence, and to embellish their souls with virtue which ordinarily accompanies a good education. . . . In this task these religious have succeeded in obtaining the applause of prelates, magistrates, citizens, and people. . . . It is not yet determined to what particular rule, among those under the name of St. Augustine, they should be attached, but they wish to follow that of the regular canons which flourish in their country." The Sovereign Pontiff then confirms in perpetuity "the institute of these mothers and their convents and houses," giving them the title of "Regular Canonesses of St. Augustine," of the "Congregation of Nôtre Dame."

The new teaching order founded by Peter Fourier, assisted by Alix le Clerc, and solemnly approved by the Holy See, soon spread through Lorraine, France, and Germany. At the death of the holy Founder, in 1640, there were 32 convents of the order, in 1656 more than 57, at the time of his Beatification by Benedict XIII., in 1730, they had increased to 80, and just before the French Revolution there were nearly 100. At the present day there are some 30 convents, principally in France, Germany, Belgium, and Holland.

The work, with some modifications, was soon introduced into the New World, in a remarkable way. The Canonesses of the convent at Troyes had for some time earnestly desired to carry on the object of

their Order in Canada. Circumstances, however, prevented their going ; but, at their request, Margaret Bourgeoys, the President of the Confraternity of Children of Mary attached to their convent, gladly crossed the ocean. On the Feast of St. Catherine, 1657, she opened a school at Montreal, then called Ville Marie, in which, in accordance with the principle laid down by Peter Fourier, the poor were taught gratuitously. The school was a great success, but Margaret soon felt the need of fellow-workers. She therefore returned to France to seek for them among her sisters, the Children of Mary, at Troyes. The religious willingly gave her all the assistance they could ; three members of the sodality volunteered for the work, to whom a fourth was added from Paris. Returning to Canada with her companions, Margaret opened a boarding as well as a day school. Fresh workers came, and in 1676 they were formed into the "Congregation of Nôtre Dame." Margaret Bourgeoys died in 1700. The cause of her canonization was introduced in 1871, and in 1879 she was declared Venerable. The work she had transplanted from France to Canada is still flourishing and progressing. At her death there were ten houses in the Dominion. There are now 96 spread over the whole of North America, under a Superioress-General, who resides at Montreal, where is the mother house of the congregation.

When it became evident that the new order was taking root and spreading, the holy Founder was requested by his spiritual daughters and by Mgr. de Lenoncourt, Bishop of Nancy, to supplement the temporary regulations which he had given them in 1598 by more ample and developed constitutions. He set to work, and in 1617 he gave them the

Statutes, which the Bishop formally approved. But it was only a short time before his death that the Constitutions, as they are now to be seen in the original MS. religiously preserved in the Convent of Mattaincourt, were completed. In this admirable work—approved for the whole congregation by Pope Innocent X. in 1645—the fruit of forty years of study and experience, the holy Founder keeps constantly in view the characteristic object of his institute, the union of the contemplative with the active life, the duties of Mary with those of Martha.

The work is divided into five parts. A complete section is on "The Education of Children," and is subdivided into two chapters, "On the management of boarders" and "The instruction of day scholars." The rules given by Fourier for the education of female children of the middle and higher classes are full of wisdom and most important. But the instruction of the poorer classes was his particular object, and it may be interesting to know what the holy priest thought on this point. In our days we hear so much of board schools, compulsory education, female learning, women's rights, that we may be excused if we give a few extracts to show what was Fourier's idea of Christian education for the children of the poorer classes.

In the preamble to the chapter "On the instruction of the day-scholars," he says: "It is most expedient and essential for the good of the poor children, their fathers and mothers, and the families they will one day rule, and the commonwealth itself, that they should be early brought up and carefully instructed in the fear of God, and as much as possible in every thing which can be of service to them in enabling them to get their living." This was to be done with

a view of preventing them from falling into misery. Nothing, indeed, tends so much to this as accustoming women to useful work, especially in all that concerns the home and housekeeping. Therefore the rule adds: "The nuns will strive to teach their little scholars whatever lies in their power, as religious to do, and which will be befitting for girls in the world to practise, to please God, their parents, and others belonging to them. To dispose them in such manner as to make them possess a becoming exterior joined to a pure interior; to exercise them in the holy love of God and a sincere charity for their neighbours; to conduct themselves wisely among the rich and great of the earth, and in times of poverty, neglect, and want; to enable them to see and provide in all prudence, and in time for the necessities of the present life, and the wants of their bodies, and all directed with especial regard to a happy eternity." No one will deny that we have here a noble model for female education; the education, be it remembered, of the daughters of the poor. They were to be taught not useless and fanciful things, but "the Catechism . . . a love of virtue, of good works, and of Christian manners . . . civility and propriety of behaviour . . . reading, writing, arithmetic, sewing, and other feminine occupations, and whatever may be of use to those who are likely to have need of their services." The spiritual welfare of the poor must go first, but Fourier makes also manual labour occupy a large share in their education. No wonder, then, that in a petition which he presented at Rome, to obtain the canonical institution of his religious, he could write, "that it has been a subject of remark and admiration that the children who pass under their care undergo a wonder-

ful reformation. It is seen that in a short time they learn, without much trouble, manual occupations, especially the poorer sort, who were before ignorant of anything by which they might earn their livelihood, but who now support themselves honourably, and even contribute to the means of their poor widowed mothers and their young brothers and sisters."

To school-mistresses, pupil-teachers, and others who may have to deal with non-Catholic children, called by Fourier, "poor wanderers," the following regulations given by him, may be of interest.

"If any girl of this so-called Reformation should be found among your pupils, treat her kindly and charitably; do not permit the other children to molest or taunt her. Be not hasty in asking her to renounce her errors, nor speak harshly of her religion, but as occasion may offer, praise ours, and speaking in general terms to all your scholars, show how beautiful and reasonable are its holy precepts and practices. Particularly impress on their minds the fear of God, and that children owe the greatest respect and love to their parents."

The completeness of the system introduced by Fourier for the education of poor girls is remarkable. Everything that is necessary for the formation of good housekeepers is observed. His method always tends to some useful purpose. "The children shall be taught to write receipts and bills of goods, &c. The more advanced shall also be occasionally exercised in composition; they shall be made to write letters to their companions on various subjects. They shall be taught to speak and pronounce correctly the language of their province, yet without any affectation or ostentation."

The holy Founder crowns his work with announcing

the great, and the then new, principle of gratuitous education. "In order that Our Lord may be their only paymaster . . . and to give every facility to the poorest children as well as to the rich, they shall teach gratuitously—purely for the love of God, and shall neither ask for nor accept of anything, either from the scholars or their parents or from others in their name."

Whilst Peter Fourier was thus occupied in feeding his spiritual flock at Mattaincourt, and in directing the work he had created by the institution of a new religious congregation devoted to education of the poor, Divine Providence had destined him to undertake another great enterprise.

The ancient religious orders, as Dom Calmet tells us, had at that epoch, in Lorraine, fallen into a sad state of irregular observance. The order to which Fourier belonged was not an exception. However, in in the year 1621, the Bishop of Toul (Mgr. des Porcelets de Maillane) considered that in the holy Canon of Mattaincourt he had a fit instrument to bring about the desired reform of the Canons Regular. He therefore obtained from Rome a brief, naming Peter Fourier Visitor-General of the abbeys of his order in Lorraine, with full power of redressing abuses, re-establishing the ancient discipline, and punishing the guilty. In accordance with the dispositions of the Council of Trent, it was proposed to unite together all the houses of the order in those parts and to form of them one congregation which should be disposed to embrace the reform. The Bishop urgently pressed the good Father to begin the work without delay. "In the name of God," he writes, May 16, 1622, "let it please you to come instantly to our assistance . . . for the sake of your order you cannot refuse to help,

for I am only an outsider, and you are an interested party. . . . Pray make no delay, for I can wait no longer. Send or bring all the Constitutions of the order which you may have. Come, and let us commence immediately." And the work was begun. An appeal was made to all the religious. Only four attended the summons, and to these were added two students from the University. The first thing Fourier and his new companions did was to enter into retreat, which was to prepare them for their warfare. As they were refused any other asylum they were at first received at the Abbey of St. Mary Major of Pont-à-Mousson, belonging to the Premonstratensians, lately reformed by Servais Lairuel, an old co-disciple and friend of Fourier.

The first novices of the reform were clothed on the Feast of the Purification, February 2, 1623. A few days after they were received in the Monastery of St. Rèmi of Luneville, where they made their profession in the hands of the Abbot, who formally handed over the house to them. The reform soon spread, and in the space of four years it was embraced by all the other Abbeys in Lorraine, which, in 1629, were formed into the Congregation of "Our Saviour," and solemnly approved by the Holy See. Fourier, fearing lest he should be elected General of the new congregation, delayed to renew his vows till Father Guinet had been appointed. But the latter dying in 1632 our Saint, after two unanimous elections, was constrained to take the office.

The work of the reform among the Canons Regular progressing so well, Peter Fourier thought the time had come to make another essay to accomplish the great object of his heart, viz., the gratuitous education of the poor by religious orders. One division of

the work, that for poor girls, he had already seen realized, the present seemed a favourable opportunity for attempting that for poor boys, at first so unsuccessful owing to the inconstancy of the subjects he had employed. "Seeing the religious," says Bèdel, "so ardently burning with the desire of doing good, he hesitated not to lay before them his wishes and plans, which were not only to combat for the reform of nine or ten monasteries, scattered here and there over the country, but to draw many out of the deluge of spiritual evil, . . . and particularly to make war against ignorance, by teaching gratuitously boys, as the nuns taught the girls. . . . Without wishing to reap other people's harvest, he only desired to glean what they had left; to throw the schools open to rich and poor boys, as soon as they had come to the use of reason, to teach them reading, writing, and sufficient Latin to enable them to enter the colleges. . . . If any of the students, not wishing to make this course, but knowing reading and writing, desired to enter the world, they should be asked, as well as their parents, what trade they intended to follow, and then instruction was to be given them for some months in such things as might be most useful to enable them to follow it, and improve their temporal and spiritual life."

But if there were any among the students who wished to embrace the ecclesiastical life, Fourier directed that after having been instructed on the excellent dignity of that vocation, they should be taught Gregorian Chant, and all that regards Minor and Sacred Orders. He was also heard to speak of the intention he had of asking the Bishops not to allow any ecclesiastic to undertake the care of souls before presenting an attestation from one of his monasteries

declaring him versed in pastoral functions and in the direction of souls.

In the mind of Fourier, the work of gratuitous instruction he had designed for his Canons, was a counterpart of the nuns' mission. The deputation sent by our Saint to Rome in 1627 to obtain the canonical recognition of his congregation, were charged to ask this favour for the Canons, as it had been obtained for the nuns.

"Regarding our wished-for schools," he says in his instructions, "it will be well to show that as the boys who do not wish to learn Latin, and others before they enter college, have no religious order to take charge of them, at least in these parts, it seems that it is as it were a vacant benefice in the Church of God. Let us, therefore, humbly petition for it." But this vacant benefice was refused to the Canons Regular—in Rome in those days it was not thought a sufficiently dignified office for priests; and when in 1724 the instruction of youth was confided by Benedict XIII. to the Christian Brothers it was on condition that they should not be allowed to aspire to the priesthood.

The Canons Regular, however, did not entirely abandon the educational scheme proposed to them by their holy Reformer. According to the testimony of Dom Calmet they had in Lorraine several colleges which were "sources of great reputation to them in all the country for their great skill in teaching the humanities." It was to them that the colleges of the Jesuits in Lorraine were entrusted when their order was suppressed.

In the midst of his labours for Christian education and the reform of the Canons Regular, Fourier, in 1625, received from his Bishop an order to undertake

yet another most difficult work. It was to combat Protestantism which had invaded the Principality of Salm near Nancy. Thirty years had been spent in controversies and vain efforts. Bèdel, his faithful historian, who had also been his companion during that enterprise, tells us how Fourier succeeded in that difficult undertaking and what means he used: "After having fortified the Catholics," he says, "by sermons and frequent exhortations, his prayers, tears, and good example were devoted to the sectaries of Calvin. . . . So that notwithstanding their great diversity of opinion in religious affairs, they uniformly paid him great respect, and were very fond of him; while he, on his part, never rebuked them. . . . He never reproached them in strong language, or even called them *heretics*, as this name annoyed them, but he spoke of them simply as *strangers*. Seeing them one day returning from their meeting in great numbers, he suddenly stopped and began to cry so bitterly, that one of the leading men of the town accosting him asked him if he were ill or in any necessity, and kindly placed his house and services at his disposal. Fourier thanking him said, 'I weep at seeing these poor *strangers* so sadly deceived, and at the thought of the pains these good citizens are taking to gain hell.'" At first the holy missionary began to preach in the streets of Badonviller, being often insulted and even beaten, but always remaining calm and benevolent. Then, accompanied by two Jesuits, he preached in all the neighbouring villages, and with so great success that six months after his arrival he had the consolation to see the Protestant place of worship dedicated to God in honour of the Blessed Virgin, and, says the old biographer, "These beginnings have with God's aid made such progress

that the doctrines of Calvin are now entirely banished from the soil and his followers extinct in all this country."

Besides these evangelical labours among the Protestants, the holy Father was also employed by his Bishop in visiting the diocese and giving missions throughout the country. In this work, too, he was very successful, and in order that the fruits of his labours might be permanent, he conceived the idea of establishing a nursery of apostolic men in the Vosges. A benefactor of the order, M. Virion, having afterwards supplied the necessary means, a site was selected for a monastery in the picturesque valley of Tholy. A church was raised, and a house was built by its side, which was occupied by Canons Regular of the Congregation of Our Saviour till the time of the great French Revolution. It is to this establishment of apostolic men that that part of Lorraine chiefly owes the preservation of the Catholic faith.

Fourier was not permitted to die among the spiritual children he loved so well. His well-known attachment to the house of Lorraine raised a powerful enemy against him in the person of Cardinal Richelieu, and he was driven into exile. In May, 1636, at the age of 72, after a last adieu to his country and to his beloved Mattaincourt, accompanied by some of his nuns from Mirecourt and by one of his canons, he entered Gray. A benefactor gave them a house, which is still existing, now turned into a Convent of Canonesses. Fourier reserved for himself a small room, and there spent the last years of his mortal life. A free school for the poor children of the town was soon opened, and Fourier in his old age, "as if to contribute his share in paying for the

hospitality accorded to them, not only caused the religious who had accompanied him to teach the youth, but he himself, feeble as he was, went every day to the schools, and took the most stupid and troublesome of the scholars, and taught them with admirable patience." Thus, faithful to the last to his love of instructing the poor, he died December 9, 1640.

One of his historians thus records his last moments and edifying death : "He held his crucifix pressed to his lips and implored his Redeemer to shed one drop of His precious blood upon his departing soul. Then invoking Mary, he cried, 'Show thyself a Mother!' and this he repeated. He requested the attendants to read to him the holy death of St. Augustine, anxious to imitate so saintly a model, even to his death. Afterwards he recited the psalm *Miserere*, but on arriving at the verse 'Cast me not away from Thy sight,' he trembled, and his tears for some time choked all utterance. After having received the Viaticum and Extreme Unction, he spent the remainder of his time in perpetual thanksgiving and ravished in ecstatic reveries. The religious, seeing him at the point of death, knelt down and begged him to bless them and the whole congregation, at which the Saint raised his hands thrice, made the sign of the cross over his body, invoked the sweet names of Jesus and Mary, and with his eyes fixed on heaven, calmly slept in the Lord."

After his death a dispute arose for the possession of his body. The magistrates of Gray claimed it as the prize and the reward of their hospitality, the Canons Regular, his spiritual children, naturally desired to retain with them the mortal remains of their beloved Father. A compromise was effected,

the inhabitants of Gray being allowed to retain the heart of the Saint, which is still venerated in the parish church of the town, while the Canons Regular had then secured, as they thought, the body of their holy Father. On the way to one of their abbeys in Lorraine they stopped at Mattaincourt and placed the body in the church for the night. The next morning, however, the old parishioners of the good Father protested that the sacred remains should never be removed from among them, and that they would rather yield their lives than the body of their Father. Upon repeated commands from their sovereign the men at length gave way, and the *cortège* was about to set out, when the women rushed forth, threw themselves upon the bier, and declared that they could never part with their treasure. To prevent bloodshed their wishes were complied with, and it now remains in the church which Fourier had served for so many years, and where it is visited by thousands of pilgrims, who come to invoke the help of the Bon Père, the Apostle of Lorraine.

In 1730 Benedict XIII. published the decree of his Beatification, and on Ascension Day, 1897, Leo XIII. solemnly added Peter Fourier to the catalogue of the Saints.

ST. EDMUND, KING AND MARTYR

BY J. ARTHUR FLOYD

ON entering the crypt of the church of St. Sernin, at Toulouse, a white marble tablet attached to the wall at once attracts the attention of the visitor. It records that "by the pious munificence of the Emperor Charlemagne, Louis le Debonnaire, and Charles the Bold, the illustrious Basilica of St. Saturninus received the remains of several Apostles, and of a great number of Martyrs, Virgins and Confessors of the Faith." A list of the names of these saints contains that of "St. Edmund, King of England." Who was this English king, the fame of whose sanctity was such that far away in Southern France his relics are enshrined in honour amongst those of apostles and other saints? The following pages give an account of St. Edmund of East Anglia, of the circumstances which resulted in the expatriation of his relics, and of their happy preservation from

destruction by the despoilers of shrines in the sixteenth century.

St. Edmund was the last of the East Anglian kings of the dynasty of the Uffings. His dominions extended over the country of the North-Folk—Norfolk; the South-Folk—Suffolk; and part of Cambridgeshire. This district, known as East Anglia, was washed by the sea on the east and north; on the south lay the kingdom of Essex; whilst the great fen-land, covered in those days with water and marshes, ran along the greater part of the western frontier, and formed a natural defence against any aggression from the neighbouring kingdom of Mercia.

Uffa had founded and given his name to the dynasty of the Uffings in the year 571, and from the time of Eorpwald, who was assassinated—probably on account of his Christian Faith—in a pagan insurrection in 627, that dynasty became illustrious for the virtues of its kings, who, with one exception, were either canonized saints or men apparently not unworthy of the honours of the altar. The shortness of Eorpwald's reign did not permit of any organized attempt to introduce Christianity into East Anglia. For three years after his murder the sovereign power was wielded by the fanatical pagans who had put him to death, and then the legitimate royal family again came to the throne in the person

of St. Sigebert, who had spent his earlier years in exile in Burgundy, and had there been admitted to the Sacraments of the Christian Faith. At his accession he sent for his Burgundian preceptor St. Felix, who was raised to the episcopate, and received jurisdiction from Honorius, Archbishop of Canterbury, as first Bishop of the East Angles. St. Fursey, a saintly Irish abbot, together with a band of Irish priests and monks, opportunely crossed into England, settled in the newly-founded diocese, and placed themselves under the direction of its bishop. Schools, monasteries, and churches sprang up in all directions; and, through the zeal and fostering care of St. Sigebert, the divine truths taught by the missionaries spread throughout the district; paganism disappeared; East Anglia was added to the nations of Christendom; and subsequent ages have venerated St. Felix and St. Fursey as the apostles of the country.

Sigebert's devotion to religion became more pronounced as he advanced in years, and his vocation for a monastic life became so unmistakable that he resigned the crown and entered a monastery that he had established and dedicated to our Lady, at a place then known as Beodricsworth, now called Bury St. Edmunds. There he remained till the needs of his country and the importunity of his people induced him

to quit his retreat for a time in order to lead the East Angles in defence of Faith and Fatherland against Penda of Mercia, the champion of paganism. Unarmed, with only a wand in his hand, he directed his countrymen, and, falling on the field of battle, he was taken from earthly trials and Penda's rage. Faithfulness unto death met its reward in a crown of life, and in heaven the martyr monk pleaded the cause of his native land, and besought for East Anglia that marvellous courage and endurance and that fidelity to the Church which subsequently distinguished the rulers of St. Sigebert's line, and the people entrusted to their care.

In the first half of the ninth century the royal power was vested in St. Edmund's paternal relative and predecessor Offa of East Anglia. Elected in 793, at a time when the principality was at the mercy of the King of Mercia—also named Offa—he had been assisted in securing the throne, and in throwing off the Mercian domination, by the Emperor Charlemagne. During a long reign of sixty-one years he upheld the honour of his country, and defeated every attempt at its subjugation. In many a hard-fought battle he gave proof of his own valour, whilst at the same time he was, as an old chronicler narrates, "a respecter of justice and a lover of peace," and an ever-devoted son of the Church.

In due time the infirmities of age warned Offa that his kingdom must soon pass to another. He might reasonably have expected that the crown would descend to his only son Fremunde, who, however, had set his desires on a nobler heavenly crown, and was devoting his life to God in a hermit's cell. But the venerable king did not abandon the hope of continuing the royal authority in his own family, for this wish was subject to the will of God, and he trusted that he might incline the Divine Will to his assistance. His faith in God's power was unquestioning, for he had been taught that prayer was "suppliant omnipotence." With this belief, and with fullest confidence in the promise "Ask whatsoever you will in My Name and it shall be done unto you," he set out on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, to renew his petition on the sacred spots that so vividly recalled the sublime mysteries of the Incarnation and Passion of our Lord. On his way through Saxony he rested in the Court of his relative Alcmund, who reigned over a part of that country, and there, for the first time, he met Alcmund's son Edmund.

St. Edmund was born in 841; at the time of Offa's visit he was a bright, winsome lad of about thirteen years of age. Early in life, so we are told, he was "devotedly attached to the Church," and at the age of fourteen knew the whole of

the Latin Psalter by heart. On his father's side he was directly related to the East Anglian royal family. His qualities and disposition at once won Offa's affection and esteem, and the good old king assigned the meeting with his youthful relative to the finger of Providence in reward for that faith which prompted this wearisome pilgrimage to the cradle of Christendom, and he saw in Edmund the long-wished-for heir, born of his own ancestral line. At his departure on his journey eastward he presented Edmund with a gold ring, saying to him, "My dearest son Edmund, accept this memorial of our kinship and affection, as well as of my obligation to you for your unremitting attentions to me. For these I thank you now and am reserving a special recompense for you, if such be the Will of God."

He reached the Holy Land, and there, with a fuller knowledge of God's love for man which Bethlehem and Calvary ever inspires, he confidently asked for that good thing which he desired for his country and himself. On the return journey Offa reached the place called St. Giorgii, when his increasing infirmities told him that his earthly pilgrimage was now at its end. Calling together his attendants, he nominated St. Edmund as his successor, and, having instructed them to deliver to the young prince the signet-ring which he himself had received from the

bishop at his own coronation, he passed away in peace.

With the consent of his father Edmund accepted the nomination to the East Anglian throne, and, attended by a suitable retinue, he sailed for England, and landed at Hunstanton in the year 855. On first landing he prostrated himself on the ground to ask for God's blessing on himself, his rule, and the people over whom he was to exercise authority. When he arose a number of springs "of sweet and crystal water gushed forth from the earth, as tokens of God's favour." A twelfth-century writer—Gaufridus de Fontibus—says of the springs: "To this our own day they excite the admiration of the beholder, flowing as they do with a continuous sweet and cheering murmur to the sea. Many sick," he says, "wash in these fountains and are restored to their former health, and pilgrims carry the healing water to remote parts for the infirm and others to drink." In this nineteenth century the late Father Joseph Lazenby, S.J. (a devoted client of St. Edmund) testifies that those springs still retain their health-restoring properties.

The nomination of Edmund to the throne was open to objection on account of his immature age, so that his election and coronation were delayed. The greater part of his first year in East Anglia was spent in privacy and study at a

royal residence at Attleborough, although once during this period of preparation, accompanied by St. Humbert, Bishop of Elmham, he appeared at a council held at Winchester under Ethelwulph, King of the West Saxons. Ethelwulph had just returned from Rome, where, in company with his younger son Alfred (afterwards Alfred the Great) "he had devoutly gone on a visit to the threshold of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and to the most holy Pope Leo"—the reigning Pontiff. A charter drawn up and confirmed by this council throws light on the practical charity and devotion to the Church that then prevailed in England. "Since we perceive," says this charter, "that perilous times are pressing upon us, that there are in our days warlike conflagrations, plunderings of our wealth, and most cruel depredations by devastating enemies from barbarous and pagan nations, and manifold tribulations to afflict us for our sins, even to our utter extermination; therefore, I, Ethelwulph, by the advice of my bishops and nobles . . . have consented and determined that there shall be given to the servants of God, whether male or female, or the poor laity, a certain hereditary portion of the lands, with a priority over every other tenure, namely, the tenth manse[1] always; but when that may

[1] "Manse implies generally a dwelling and a certain quantity of land annexed; sometimes it is synonymous with a hyde, or plough-land."

happen to be the least, then the tenth part of all their goods shall be given in perpetual freedom to Holy Church, that it may be safe and exonerated from all secular services, all royal tributes, great or small, or those taxes which we call 'wynterden.' And let it be free in all things for the release of our souls and the remission of our sins, that it may be employed in God's service alone. . . . This charter was drawn up . . . before the great Altar, in honour of Mary, the glorious Virgin and Mother of God, and of St. Michael, the Archangel ; and also for the honour of Blessed Peter, the Chief of the Apostles, and of our Blessed Father Pope Gregory."[1] The

[1] Quoted from *The History of Ingulf*, edited and translated by the late Rev. J. Stevenson, M.A., vicar of Leighton Buzzard, afterwards a priest of the Society of Jesus. In a footnote the editor expresses his conviction that this charter is "spurious," and in his translation of Malmesbury's *History of the Kings* gives, as his reason for this conclusion, that the date to which it is attributed is incorrect, as it seems, in all the MSS. of the last-named work. It may, however, be pointed out that Ethelwulph's donation is recorded in Asser's *Annals of King Alfred*—written within forty years of the Council of Winchester. It is mentioned in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle ;* in the tenth-century *Chronicle of Ethelwerd ;* in Malmesbury's *History of the Kings ;* in the *Chronicle of Melrose ;* and is in harmony with Ethelwulph's well-known devotion to the Church as evidenced by his pilgrimage to Rome and grants of money to the Pope and the Roman Churches. It is also to be noted that Father Stephenson's opinion was expressed in the days before a more extended study of the old English chroniclers had resulted in his submission to the Catholic Church.

archbishops and bishops of Anglia, three kings, and a large number of abbots, abbesses, dukes, earls, and the nobility of the whole land, were present, and all approved this royal charter, and the dignitaries subscribed it with their names. In this document we have a record of the earliest known official act of St. Edmund in East Anglia, for, as mentioned above, he took part in the deliberations of the Council of Winchester, and appended his signature to the aforesaid charter.

From the time of his landing at Hunstanton St. Edmund had "submitted himself to the direction of Bishop Humbert, by whose counsel and admonitions he became a prince endowed with all virtues, devotion, and Christian wisdom." On returning from Winchester to Attleborough that good bishop had persuaded the North Folk to confirm Offa's nomination of St. Edmund to the throne. This took place at Christmas, 855, but the South Folk were not committed to this election, since they were not represented in the council in which it was proposed and carried. During the following year reports were spread that the terrible Danes would sooner or later attempt an invasion of East Anglia. It therefore appeared to be more expedient that, for the protection of Faith and Fatherland, the South Folk should concur in the election already made

by the North Folk, in order to unite both under a common ruler, and the people clamoured for the settlement of the succession. A Wittenagemot[1] of the whole of East Anglia assembled, composed of princes, prelates, abbots, and of "the nobles and wise men" of the country. St. Humbert had convoked the gathering, was its leading spirit, and had at his command the weighty authority of the Church. His close and intimate association with the youthful candidate for the throne enabled him to form an accurate estimate of his character and qualifications; in his veins flowed the blood royal of the Uffing dynasty; he already held the royal signet-ring bequeathed by Offa; by that king he had been nominated to the throne. His valour had been tested by crossing the ocean and leading an expedition into their country, and his piety and intelligence were known to all. He was young, but each succeeding month was diminishing that objection, and the North Folk had already elected him to be their king. With a warmth of feeling enkindled by affection, together with a sincere conviction that he would make a ruler worthy of his noble ancestry, and a valiant champion

[1] According to Hallam, "The great council by which an Anglo-Saxon king was guided in all the main acts of government bare the appellation of Wittenagemot, or the assembly of the wise men."

of the nation's liberty and rights, St. Humbert pleaded his cause, and, persuaded by his eloquence, and by their own knowledge of the truth of his reasoning, the council finally elected Edmund King of the whole of East Anglia.

Christmas Day in the year 856 was appointed for the king's coronation at Bures, near Sudbury, and was the signal for rejoicing throughout the principality. The leading men of the little kingdom and the surrounding district thronged the streets of the old town. At the approach of the hour for High Mass a stately procession of acolytes, choristers, monks, and priests, with the holy rood borne aloft in their midst, emerged from the church door. Last in the long line came Bishop Humbert, "crosier in hand, blessing the kneeling people as he passed along" the road to the residence of the king-elect. Side by side prince and prelate walked in the procession on its return to the church. The holy ceremony commenced, and before the altar Edmund took the Coronation Oath. "I promise," he said, "in the name of the Most Holy Trinity, first, that the Church of God, and all Christian people, shall enjoy true peace under my government. Secondly, that I shall prohibit every kind of rapine and injustice, in men of every condition. Thirdly, that in all judgments I shall command equity to be united with mercy, that the most gracious

and clement God may, through His eternal mercy, forgive us all, Amen."[1]

After the gospel the consecrated oil was poured on the head of the king, and the bishop read the prayer: "O God, the strength of the elect, and the exaltation of the humble, who by the unction of oil, didst sanctify Thy servant Aaron, and by the same didst prepare priests, kings, and prophets, to rule Thy people Israel; sanctify, Almighty God, in like manner this Thy servant, that like them he may be able to govern the people committed to his charge."[2] Seated on a throne, he was clothed by the bishop in tunic and dalmatic. The thanes placed sandals on his feet, the royal purple on his shoulders, and, in conjunction with the bishop, the sceptre of mercy and the iron rod of justice in his hand. They offered him a naked sword, and put a helmet on his head, to remind him of his duty to protect his people against their enemies.

Having laid aside sceptre, sword, and helmet, the king presented himself before the altar and again declared that "by the grace of God he

[1] This Oath may be seen in Lingard's *Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. ii. p. 36, ed. 1806. It is translated from that which St. Dunstan exacted from Ethelred at his coronation. But it is much more ancient, and is found, in nearly the same words, in the Pontifical of Archbishop Egbert, who died in 766.

[2] Lingard, *ut supra*.

will fulfil all the duties of a good king." Taking the crown from the altar he handed it to Bishop Humbert, who at once placed it on St. Edmund's head. "Live the king for ever," cried the sainted bishop, and at once, from all present, came the response, thrice repeated in increasing volume, "Amen, Amen, Amen." The Sanctus was intoned, and, lowly bending, both king and people awaited the advent of the King of kings. Once again He descended to His altar throne, and was reverently greeted on earth by language inspired from heaven, "Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini." Then the pent-up joy of that greeting mastered all restraint, and the "Hosanna in excelsis" rang through the church, expressing the emotion of hearts that realized the renewed corporal presence of Jesus, Mary's Son. The "Domine non sum dignus" expressed the innermost feelings of the kneeling king as humbly and reverently he again approached the altar to receive the Holy Housel, and the first act of his reign as crowned King of East Anglia was to pay homage at the feet of the King of Angels.

Throughout St. Edmund's reign the Danish invasions kept the kingdoms of the Heptarchy in a state of unrest and almost continuous panic. In 860 the Danes landed at Southampton, plundered the royal city of Winchester, and, after a repulse, put to sea, and coasted round to the Isle

of Thanet to set up their winter quarters. The people of Kent gave them hostages, and promised a sum of money; but to no purpose, for they broke the treaty, and "laid waste the whole district by nightly predatory excursions." Again we are told that Athelred, the son of Ethelwulf, "was personally engaged in hostile conflict against the enemy (the Danes) nine times in one year." To defend his dominions against their inroads St. Edmund is said to have thrown up the earthwork long known as St. Edmund's Dyke, which stretched from near Newmarket to the Fen country, and thus protected the one vulnerable point on the Mercian frontier. The rejection of the ancient name of this gigantic memorial of the martyr king's patriotism, and its rededication as the Devil's Ditch, is pointedly suggestive of the tendencies of the last three and a half centuries.

About the year 866 the Danes marched into East Anglia, and during the greater part of the year they devastated the country and burnt churches, monasteries, and towns. Whoever confessed the name of Christ was accounted an enemy; men and children were ruthlessly murdered, and the women taken into slavery. King Edmund could not have prevented this invasion, but he took care that the Danes should find no rest within his dominions. In skirmish after

skirmish he assailed them and cut off parties of their men, till, on the approach of winter, they retired to their strongly fortified position at Thetford and sued for peace. The king foresaw that an attack on the town would certainly result in the loss of a large number of his soldiers; hence, to prevent further bloodshed, he agreed that the Danes should remain, on their promise to cease from their depredations and leave the country in the spring. History warned him that they would keep their promise only as long as was necessary for their safety; consequently he kept so vigilant a watch on their movements that at length they turned their backs on East Anglia and marched back into Northumbria.

Two years later the Danes invaded Mercia, and were in possession of Nottingham, one of the strongest positions in the country, and there is reason to believe that St. Edmund assisted the King of Mercia and his other allies in the siege of that town, with the result that the Danes capitulated on condition that they should leave the country without molestation. An interesting reminiscence of this siege is extant in Abbot Ingulf's *History of Croyland Abbey*. A charter, drawn up at that time, which bears St. Edmund's signature as confirming its contents, reads as follows: "Beorred, by the gracious

gift of God King of the Mercians, to all the provinces, and to the people who inhabit the whole of Mercia, and preserve the Catholic Faith, wishes eternal greeting in our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Since in punishment for our sins," the charter continues, "we perceive the extended hand of the Lord daily impending over our heads with an iron scourge, I think it necessary and salutary to appease his anger by the pious prayers of Holy Mother Church, and the free donation of alms, and to implore his assisting grace in our necessities by worthy acts of devotion." Beorred then confirms the gift of the possessions of Croyland to Abbot Theored and the said holy monastery, "for the good of my soul, and for the remission of my iniquities." Finally, all the possessions mentioned in this charter, "the land, marshes, fens, churches, chapels, manors, mansions, cottages, woods, lands, and meadows, I grant, establish, and confirm to God and St. Guthlac, free, exempt, and exonerated from all earthly burdens and secular service, on behalf of the souls of the donors of the aforesaid gifts, and for the merit of my soul and the souls of all my progenitors and heirs, as an eternal alms to Abbot Theodred and his monks serving God in the Monastery of Croyland for a possession for ever. This my Royal Charter, in the year

of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 868, . . . at Nottingham, in the presence of my brethren and friends and all my people assembled together at the siege of the Pagans, I have confirmed with the ratification of the Holy Cross." These were the means adopted by St. Edmund and his Christian contemporaries to appease the anger of God and to assert their firm assurance of the efficacy of the "pious prayers of Holy Mother Church."

The king had by this time fully justified St. Humbert's estimate of his fitness to occupy the East Anglian throne. A holy and celibate life and the impartial administration of justice had gained the esteem of his people, who, influenced by his example and that of his Court, "departing from the rude and boorish manners of their ancestors, began to be exceedingly civilized and polite." Although he was a lover of peace, yet "no English king made a more gallant stand against the Danes, none deserved better of his countrymen, none fell more heroically than Edmund of East Anglia. But in all he designed and did, he sought not his own glory. With mind and heart he looked to Heaven. He gave no thought to self or earth."

A narrative illustrating his personal courage is published from an authentic source in Mr. J. R. Thompson's *Records of St. Edmund.* On a

certain occasion the king was "in a castle which was considered impregnable. An old man, blind through age, and a pensioner of the king," was taken prisoner, and, "for a bribe, made known to the Danes a weak point in the fortifications, which he knew well from having superintended the building of it. The king mounted his charger, and galloped out of the gate through the midst of the Danish army. He was pursued and overtaken, and, being asked where the king was, Edmund (like St. Athanasius on a former occasion) bade them haste back. For, said he, when I was in the castle he was there. They let him go and returned to the castle, but soon found out their mistake; and, struck with terror, raised the siege from fear of what actually happened, for Edmund lost no time in collecting his forces, and the Danes were cut off and almost all slain as they deserved."

Two of the Danish leaders—Inguar and Hubba, the sons of Lothparch—were animated by deep-rooted personal hatred of St. Edmund due to the poisoning of their minds by a malicious charge of murdering their father. It appears that Lothparch had been driven by a storm on to the coast of East Anglia. The kindness he then received from St. Edmund roused the hatred and jealousy of the king's huntsman Berne, and he, taking advantage of a favourable

opportunity, slew Lothparch. The crime was discovered, and Berne, in place of immediate execution, was set adrift in an open boat without oars, and thus given a chance of life. Driven by the waves on to the coast of Denmark, he was taken before Inguar and Hubba, and accused Edmund of the crime which he himself had perpetrated. Their defeats in East Anglia added to their resentment, and inflamed them and their followers with a desire for revenge. A renewed invasion was the consequence. Leaving their headquarters at York, in the year 870, they destroyed on their march the monasteries at Peterborough, Croyland, Ramsey, Soham, and Ely. Hubba tarried at Soham with a strong force in charge of the baggage and the spoils taken from the inoffensive monks and from the inhabitants of the conquered towns and villages, whilst Inguar, with the rest of the Danes, advanced to meet Wulketule, who commanded the East Anglian army on the frontier. Having overcome and killed that brave soldier, he stormed Thetford—then the capital of East Anglia—massacred the inhabitants, and secured possession of the Castle Hill, an earthwork that had been thrown up by the Danes in an earlier invasion, and which overlooked and dominated the town and surrounding country.

News of the destruction of Wulketule and his

army and of the loss of Thetford reached St. Edmund at Framlingham, a central position, in which he was waiting to advance either to the coast or to the frontier, as occasion should render necessary. Undaunted by the disaster which had overtaken and deprived him of a large portion of his forces, the king determined to attack the Danish position, but, before the march commenced, messengers came from Inguar requiring Edmund "without any resistance to admit the Danes to a quiet possession of half his dominions, and to pay them subjection and tribute for the rest. But in case he refused these equal conditions, he and his subjects must expect the same or greater rigour than the provinces already conquered by them." Calling for the messengers, Edmund replied "that he was a king and a Christian; and in the former capacity, would never refuse to expose his life for the defence of his subjects; in the latter, he esteemed it unlawful to permit their impious superstitions to be practised in places where the only true God had been purely worshipped, for whose honour he was ready to endure the most cruel death that such horrible enemies could inflict."

"Having thus dismissed the messengers," says Matthew of Westminster—quoted by Cressy—"the pious king commanded his soldiers to

betake them to their arms, telling them how noble and necessary a thing it was to expose their lives for their country and religion, and not to desert those whose defence they had undertaken. The nobles, and even Bishop Humbert himself, seeing the king's resolution to fight, advised and encouraged him to go and meet the enemy, and not to permit him freely to waste more of his country." Whereupon, marching with his army to Thetford, a furious battle ensued, "with horrible slaughter on both sides, insomuch that the ground all about flowed with blood. Which conflict without intermission continued from morning till night, each party hoping and fearing by turns. The pious King Edmund in the meantime bitterly mourned the shedding of so much blood," although he knew that the death of "his own soldiers, who fought for their country and the faith of Christ, would be attended and rewarded with the crown of martyrdom."

Night closed in, and the Danes retired, leaving Edmund victor. He did not pursue them, but, with the remains of his army, marched to Hoxne, where he usually kept his Court. There news was brought to him that his vanquished antagonist Inguar had been reinforced by the arrival of Hubba with ten thousand men. No thought of his own danger troubled the mind of the king, but he could see that the entire loss of the army

under Wulketule, and the losses more recently sustained at Thetford, had rendered hopeless any attempt to subdue the combined Danish forces. He was persuaded that the Danes would give his countrymen no peace whilst he, their king, was alive; and with a desire "to prevent the further shedding of blood he determined not to renew the fight," but "to expose his own life only as a sacrifice for his country and faith, judging it expedient that one should die, and the whole nation perish not." Once again, as on a former occasion, "Bishop Humbert earnestly besought the king by flight to reserve himself for a better opportunity. This he utterly refused, as dishonourable to himself and harmful to his subjects, who would be more cruelly treated by the enemy if he himself by flight should seem to threaten a return. Therefore advising all to submit themselves to God's just severity, and not to provoke their enemies by showing a willingness to resist, he resolved to do the same. Laying aside his temporal arms and weapons he retired into the church, where he devoutly prayed unto our Lord that He would assist and strengthen him with His Holy Spirit and grace to sustain with Christian constancy the death which he expected." Thus armed with armour from the armoury of God, with weapons not of this world, prostrate before the altar, and with Bishop

Humbert by his side, he awaited the coming of the Danes.

He was not kept long in suspense, for Inguar, "having received information of all these things, sent soldiers and officers to take and bring away the holy king; entering the church, they drew him violently out of it, and having bound him with ropes, led him to the presence of their impious general, by whose command he was presently tied fast to a tree, and there for a long time cruelly whipped, and also treated with all expressions of scorn and contumely."

"The glorious champion of Christ showed no signs of fear or impatience, but with great fervour continued his prayers to our Lord, whose name he devoutly invoked. This increased the rage of his tormentors, whereupon, laying aside their whips, they took their bows and darts, with which, as in sport, they pierced his whole body in all places, so that in a short time there was not left place for a new wound." All this time "Inguar ceased not to urge and compel him to renounce the Faith of Christ and Confession of the Blessed Trinity. But perceiving how vainly he attempted to shake the unconquerable mind of this holy Martyr, who the more devoutly and with a louder voice called on the glorious name of Jesus, the enraged tyrant commanded the tormentors to cut off his head, which was

presently executed" on the 20th of November, in the year 870.

Thus St. Edmund achieved the greatest and noblest of his victories, the gates of heaven opened to receive another saint, and from His Hands, whose Name he ceased not to celebrate in the midst of his torments, he received the double crown of virginity and martyrdom. Once again the Cross had triumphed, although its champion had apparently been silenced in death, and before the century had ended a Christian Dane sat on the East Anglian throne. True, it was but a transitory gleam of sunshine seen through a rift in the clouds, but it was the harbinger of the days, then near at hand, when the whole of the Danes in East Anglia, and throughout England, became devout clients of St. Edmund, and fervent disciples of that holy Faith for which he had suffered at their hands.

A remarkable confirmation of the history of St. Edmund's passion came to light some years since. For ages the oak-tree at Hoxne, which tradition assigned as the one to which the saint had been bound, was preserved as a memorial of the heroic king. In 1848 it fell to the ground. On splitting up the trunk an arrow-head, bearing every indication of great antiquity, was found embedded in the wood. It was placed in the Athenæum at Bury St. Edmunds, and was ex-

hibited on the occasion of a visit of the Royal Archæological Society to that town. By that learned body it was held to be an unquestionable confirmation of the historical account of the martyrdom.

In 903 St. Edmund's grave at Hoxne was reopened, and, to the astonishment of the assembled clergy and people, the body was found incorrupt. "Yea, moreover," says Cressy, "the head was so firmly compacted to the body, as if it had never been separated. No wound at all appeared, only about the neck there was a round, purple circle, which adorned it more gloriously than any, the most precious chain, testifying what he had suffered for God." It was then translated to Bury St. Edmunds, and there enshrined. The body was unquestionably in that town in the twelfth century, for a trustworthy writer of that age—William of Malmesbury—says of the incorrupt relics of English saints : "There are altogether five which I have known of, though the residents in many places boast of more ; Saints Etheldreda and Werburga, Virgins ; King Edmund ; Archbishop Elphege ; and Cuthbert, the ancient Father. These with skin and flesh unwasted and their joints flexile appear to have a certain vital warmth and to be merely sleeping." Again in the year 1198 Abbot Sampson, in the presence of certain of the monks

of Bury, "saw and touched the body of St. Edmund on the night immediately following the feast of St. Catherine," and eighteen of the monks signed the document as witnesses of the fact.

After Abbot Sampson's time there is no evidence that the relics were ever again seen in Bury St. Edmunds, and "English historians make no further mention of miracles wrought by St. Edmund." Caseneuve treats their silence as a tacit admission that the body had been taken away. He further tells us that the Inventories of St. Sernin, made about the year 1440, mention the relics of St. Edmund as being then preserved in that church.

It was before the altar of St. Edmund's Abbey Church that the Barons met on the saint's feast-day, November 20, 1214, and bound themselves by oath to wrest Magna Charta from King John.

They invited Louis the Dauphin of France (Father of St. Louis) into England. He came over again at the accession of Henry III.; and during the course of his expedition occupied Bury St. Edmunds. Animated by the strongest desire to possess the relics of the town's great tutelar saint, he took advantage of his opportunity, and carried them away into France. The peerless shrine, of immense value, he left in the possession of the Community of Bury Abbey—a significant estimate of the relative value of relics and shrine

compared with that of more recent visitors of the sixteenth century, who stole that which Louis had never attempted to take, and which he had considered to be of incomparably less value than the holy body which it contained.

Soon after leaving England the rebellion of the Albigenses led Louis into Southern France. Carrying the relics of St. Edmund in his train he ultimately deposited them at Toulouse in the Augustinian Abbey Church of St. Saturninus. But, as if to protest against expatriation, nature has resumed her sway, and the flesh has left the bones of the sacred body. St. Edmund's intercessory power, however, is known to be as potent now as in the days when his adopted countrymen, and the descendants of his murderers, knelt around his incorrupt body and sought his powerful aid. Still he pleads for the land over which he ruled, and for the town in which he so long was honoured ; and his most earnest petition will have borne fruit when once again England shall be brought back to that ancient Faith which he adorned by his virtues and chastity, and for which he endured a martyr's death.

Mother Margaret Hallahan.

(1803-1868.)

By Lady Amabel Kerr.

The subject of this biography was the only child of poor though respectable parents, who had migrated to London from Ireland before she was born. They had been comfortably off, but were so reduced in circumstances that during the latter years of his life Mr. Hallahan earned his living as a porter in a wine-merchant's office. Adversity soured the tempers of both himself and his wife, and the atmosphere of their home was neither peaceable nor pleasant. So painful an impression did the domestic jars and jangles make on little Margaret that she registered a childish vow never to marry, and this resolve was prominent in her mind even before she was called to the religious life. A foolish and harmless word of admiration from a fellow-servant cost the offender a severe box on the ear; and the effect of the first and only offer of marriage that she received was to make her kneel down there and then on a kitchen chair and make a vow of perpetual chastity—a vow renewed and ratified later with the sanction of her confessor. In spite, however, of its discord, her home was a happy one. Her father worshipped and freely indulged her, but her mother was watchful and strict, and gave the little girl some lessons which she carried

with her through life. Margaret was gifted with an impetuous nature, which on one side showed itself by violent ebullitions of temper, and on the other by fervent acts of piety somewhat extravagantly expressed. "Take care!" said Mrs. Hallahan warningly, when she found the child prostrating herself and kissing the ground; "little saints make big sinners." This anecdote gives us a clue to whence it was that Mother Margaret herself drew the shrewd commonsense which so characterized her.

Margaret, however, lost both her parents by the time she was nine years old. When her father died she was placed by friends in the Somerstown Orphanage, where during three short years she received all the education ever bestowed on her; and when Mrs. Hallahan followed her husband to the grave, the little girl, only nine years of age, began a life of domestic service, in which she persevered for nearly thirty years. She would not have wished it otherwise, for she said of service that it was a holy state. "It is so hidden and ignored," she wrote later on in her life; "it is so full of self-sacrifice that is never considered. God has appointed otherwise, or else I should have chosen it in preference to any other state."

For the first eight years after she was put to service her situations were very varied. The most permanent one held by her was with Madame Caulier, the wife of a French *émigré* noble, reduced to earn her living in London by dressmaking. She was a lady of great piety, but made austere by circumstances. Partly as a result of the souring effects of adversity, but partly on principle, she treated Margaret with the utmost severity, professing all the while to regard her as if she were her own daughter. The child's nerves broke down under the treatment. She could not meet her mistress without dropping whatever she held in her hand, and her naturally hasty temper increased in violence. She never forgot the darkness of that time, and when—only a year before her death—business took her to Cheapside through the street where she lived with the

French lady, she burst into tears at the mere recollection of her misery. "When *I* take in little orphan children," she said to herself while still in Madame Caulier's service, "I will do what I can to make them happy. They shall never have to regret their parents as I do." And grandly did she in later life carry out this design formed in her suffering childhood.

Some of her transitory situations were in Protestant families; and in these places she always stood up boldly for her religion, being remembered in one of them as "the little maid who would not eat meat on Fridays." On one occasion, when a fellow-servant spoke sneeringly about the devotion paid by Catholics to Our Lady, words failed her in her indignation, and she snatched up a large dish, and broke it over the man's head.

When seventeen years of age she was engaged to wait on Dr. Morgan, an invalid and a most holy Catholic. Having nursed him faithfully till he died, she spent the rest of her life in the world in his family, first with his son, and then with his daughter, Mrs. Thomson. Dr. Morgan left her a legacy of fifty pounds; and it is characteristic of her spirit of gratitude as well as of her contempt for money and her supernatural views of life that she spent every penny of it on Masses for the repose of his soul. Mrs. Thomson always looked on Margaret as one of her family; and she in return lavished all her heart's love on her mistress and her children. Speaking of the latter she said that her feeling for them was the strongest human affection she had ever experienced. The suffering she felt when she took one of the little boys and left him at Stonyhurst was so acute, that it brought home to her how mighty the tyranny of human attachment could become. The fear which seized her in consequence was so great as to make that day a turning-point in her life; and thenceforward she gave herself to God more completely than she had ever done before. Among other sacrifices made at that time was that of all secular reading, which was a perfect passion with her. Though possessed of a very imperfect technical education, and ignorant to the

end of her life of the rules of orthography and arithmetic, Margaret's mind was a storehouse of knowledge, and she devoured every book she could lay her hands on, from the poems of Sir Walter Scott to the ascetical works of St. John of the Cross. Now, however, she put aside all secular reading; and it was at this stage of her life that she took the vow of perpetual chastity mentioned above.

The last fifteen years of her life with the Thomsons were spent in Bruges; and during those years she led a semi-religious life without in any way neglecting her household duties, which as time went on became more, rather than less onerous, owing to the reduced circumstances in which her employers found themselves At Bruges she put herself under the direction of M. Vervasel, a confessor so severe that few had the courage to persevere under his guidance. She heard Mass every morning at four o'clock, practised severe penances, and spent every moment of leisure allowed her in visiting the poor and sick, on whom she bestowed all her savings and whatever funds she could obtain by begging from others. When, some years after she had left Belgium, Dr. Ullathorne visited Bruges, he found the memory of Margaret as fresh as when she lived there. With marks of reverence he was shown the spot near a column in the Church of St. Jacques where she used to kneel when hearing Mass, and which was still known to all as "Margaret's corner."

Her long residence in a Catholic country, where God was freely served, and where every portion of His service was fittingly carried out, had a lasting effect on the mind of Margaret, and influenced her very much in the part she played in England. Her life-time covered the great transition of this century in the position of Catholics in our country. Among her earliest recollections was that of her secret pilgrimages with her parents to Tyburn, to venerate as far as possible the scene of the martyrs' triumph; the object of the expedition being most carefully concealed from Protestant neighbours lest unpleasant consequences might ensue. When she was

in service in Margate she and other Catholics were invariably pelted with stones on their way to and from Mass. But when she died in 1868 the state of religion was very much what it is now, and Catholics might do anything and everything, certainly without raising persecution, and rarely even mockery. Her experiences of the splendour of Catholic worship in a Catholic country, and the fervour and enthusiasm which it kindled in her soul gave her a total want of reserve or self-consciousness about Catholic external observances which it took most of her co-religionists in England years to acquire; and enabled her not only to join in, but to give an impetus to the Catholic revival.

While living in Bruges she felt strongly impelled to a religious life; and that she did not at once follow the impulse was regretted by her afterwards as an infidelity to grace. As a matter of fact, whatever resistance there was did not come from herself. M. Vervasel, her severe confessor, stoutly opposed the step; and she, having when she put herself under his direction vowed obedience to him, submitted, though her soul remained dissatisfied. "I feel I want something, I know not what," she said; "I want something for God." We who can look back on her life as a whole, know what God had in store for her to do, towards which He was slowly directing her steps. While she would have fain satisfied her restless desire for action by devoting herself at once to the religious life, her director, guided by the Holy Ghost in a way that was possibly unknown to himself, kept her back with an apparently wooden obstinacy from committing her to a step which would have put an insuperable barrier in the way of that great work which she was to do in England. As a sort of compromise she obtained M. Vervasel's consent to enrolling herself as a Dominican secular Tertiary, which, while it bound her to certain rules, left her free to continue her life in the employment of the Thomsons.

Towards the end of her sojourn in Belgium a severe illness caused her to be removed from the Thomsons' house, to which she never returned. When dismissed

from the hospital she and a few other tertiaries formed themselves into a sort of community, living together and working for souls under rule. But the attempt proved a failure. Of work for souls there was indeed plenty, but as there was an utter absence of funds the community dispersed, and the day came when Margaret, having cut herself off from her friends, found herself alone in the world, homeless and almost penniless. This was God's opportunity.

A friend of hers in England, Mrs. Amherst, having heard of the way in which Margaret was devoting herself to the service of the poor in Bruges, urged her to come and devote herself instead to the needs of the souls and bodies of her co-religionists in England. She hesitated, but M. Vervasel, with an alacrity which at the time deeply wounded her, urged her to accept the offer, and she unwillingly followed his advice. It was only later that she realized how completely this holy priest, who now passed from her life, had acted under the guidance of the Holy Ghost.

On the 30th of April, 1842, Margaret landed in England. She went almost directly to Coventry, by invitation of Dr. Ullathorne who was starting a mission there, and to whom Mrs. Amherst had recommended her. There she was ostensibly in the capacity of school-mistress, though she had to find the children before she could teach them. In this, however, she found but small difficulty, and in an incredibly short time gathered two hundred round her. Of technical education she herself possessed but a modicum; and the consciousness of this made her very diffident about undertaking the office of teacher; but, nevertheless, she managed with the sole aid of some of the older girls to keep the school in a state of efficiency. She relates that she used to walk about from one class to the other, invoking the aid of the guardian angels of the children to supply her deficiencies; "and I think," she adds, "that they must have heard me, for though I was myself so ignorant, the parents always seemed satisfied, and said that they got on."

Of salary for this employment she had none, for she obstinately refused to receive a farthing. "Salary!" she cried indignantly when the subject was broached to her; "I came here for the sake of God and not for money!" She even refused to be supplied with clothing, saying that she already possessed a sufficient stock to last her; and when in the course of time some articles were nearly dropping off her, it was with difficulty that even then she was persuaded to accept the gift of new ones.

Great as was the work she effected in the day-school, the results of her labours were even greater in the night-school which she opened for the lace-making and factory girls, whom, besides teaching, she got to know in their own homes. The good she did among them was wonderful, and they, both Catholics and Protestants worshipped the very ground she trod on; and numbers of the wild, untaught young creatures were, through her instrumentality, received into the Church. Every moment not taken up by teaching was spent by Sister Margaret—as she got to be called—in visiting the poor, and especially the sick, in their own homes and haunts. When M. Vervasel had urged her to accept Mrs. Amherst's invitation she had protested that to return to a Protestant country would be "like going to hell;" nor, after she had experienced the actuality of English town life, did she see much reason to mitigate this opinion. "When I returned to England," she says, "I cannot say how distressed I was by the vice I saw everywhere. Every face seemed to bear the stamp of mortal sin. They all looked like so many lumps of flesh without souls; the very atmosphere seemed full of sin. At first I thought it had an effect upon the sun, and that it was the sins of the people that made the air so damp and foggy."

Far, however, from being dispirited by the sense of the sin which surrounded her, it winged her steps in her errands of mercy. There were in Coventry, as in all our larger towns, some poor creatures laid low by the most hideous diseases, so horrible that they

were deserted by relatives and neighbours alike. Such as these were the objects of Margaret's tenderest care; and with the aid of some of the better class of girls, whom she rallied round her, she devoted herself to providing for their souls and bodies. Few stories of the heroic charity practised by the saints in similar cases surpass the devotion displayed by Margaret in this modern, unromantic, manufacturing town; and it was given to her to reap a visible reward of her labours, for every one of these poor creatures, abandoned by man and on the verge of being forsaken by God, were received into the Church and died a holy death.

It was not only by visiting the sick and teaching the ignorant that Margaret did God's work. In the school-room after the classes she started simple services composed of the recitation of the rosary, with hymns and litanies; and these services, attracting the taste of the people of Coventry, were thronged, and imperceptibly changed the features of Catholic worship in that town. Dr. Ullathorne, of course, sanctioned the school-room services, but it was a long time before he could be induced by their manifest success and the evident good which resulted from them, to adopt anything of the same kind in the church. He, one of the old school of priests who had served God under difficulties which we know not of, was slow to believe that the Church might now safely emerge from the holes and corners into which persecution had driven her. Some of Margaret's indiscretions horrified him, and when he found that she had set up a little Belgian statue of Our Lady in the school-room he at once ordered her to lock it up in her drawer. She, accustomed to other ways of making manifest God's ways, regarded this as a slight on Our Lady, and suffered and prayed in silence, until at last the strength of her convictions re-acted on him. But on one point she was more urgent. Owing to the prevailing timorousness it was not the fashion to keep a lamp burning before the Blessed Sacrament, lest drawing attention to the altar might court irreverence and profanity. This outward ignoring of

Our Lord's presence wounded Margaret most deeply; for her long residence in a Catholic country had shown her that the more the Blessed Sacrament is known, the more will it be adored. On this point she could not keep silence, and by dint of importunity prevailed on Dr. Ullathorne to let her make the experiment of lighting the sanctuary lamp on Rosary Sunday. She herself bought the best cut glass lamp which her finances allowed; and the light thus kindled by her devotion was never extinguished.

During those early days in Coventry, Margaret, as schoolmistress, lived in the presbytery; and after a few months filled the post of housekeeper as well. Once a week Dr. Ullathorne sent for her to his parlour, and they conversed long and deeply together about the affairs of the mission, and the best means of coping with its needs; and out of these talks arose the great work of Margaret's life. Removed from the restraining influence of M. Vervasel, she yearned more than ever for the religious life, and expressed the wish to combine it with carrying on her present work at Coventry. Dr. Ullathorne entered warmly into her idea, and suggested various Orders well adapted to the scheme, which it might be well for her to join. But she stoutly maintained that, having given herself to St. Dominic when she was enrolled as a Tertiary, she neither would nor could belong to any Order but his. And so it came about that in these weekly conferences in the presbytery parlour the idea arose of establishing in Coventry a community of conventual Dominican Tertiaries, such as have existed since the days of St. Catherine, alongside of the secular Tertiaries, which were founded by St. Dominic like those of St. Francis, for the sanctification of people in the world. Having obtained the permission of the Provincial of the Dominicans, Dr. Ullathorne hired a house in Spon Street, and there under his direction, in spite of his being a Benedictine, the little community was formed in March, 1844. It consisted on starting of Mother Margaret herself, two young ladies of Coventry, who had

helped her in her work during the last two years, and another from a distance, a penitent of Dr. Ullathorne's. They all went through their noviciate together under his direction; and Mother Margaret was appointed superior, in spite of her deep humility and assertion of her lack of the art of government, and in spite especially of her desire—born of the consciousness of her strength of will and character—to be ruled over instead of to rule.

The early days of that little community are full of interest; and the stress of poverty under which it laboured reminds us of the beginnings of many other great works undertaken for God. Pending the compiling of a simple rule, which was executed soon after by Mother Margaret, Dr. Ullathorne started the four sisters with a few pregnant maxims. "First put on the spirit of Christ, and then the spirit of the rule on that," said he to the diffident and inexperienced Superior; and the more she pondered over his words the more light she gathered from them. One of his maxims sounded almost like a joke, but it had a powerful effect. "Eliminate two words from your vocabulary," said he; "uncomfortable and impossible." The success of this elimination was wonderful. The young women who had thrown in their lot with Mother Margaret had been brought up in easy if not in luxurious circumstances; and belonging as they did to an entirely heretical neighbourhood, they were cut off from even such a knowledge of the meaning of a religious life as must be possessed by every convent school-girl. Nevertheless they threw themselves heart and soul into their new life of privation, slept soundly on planks and old doors from which even the handles had not been removed, and feasted with relish on puddings of the consistency of cannon balls, or, when these were lacking, on boiled nettles. So great was their fervour that one of them was heard to exclaim: "How sweet everything tastes here, yet what should I have thought of it in my father's house?" Often, indeed, the little community would have been in want of any food at all, had it not

been for the aid of the Dominicanesses of Atherstone, and of Mrs. Amherst, who, feeling responsible for bringing Mother Margaret to England, kept a watchful eye over her and her sisters.

The only one whose heart was sad, in spite of the granting of her soul's desire, and of the manifestly good work done by the infant community, was Mother Margaret herself. It was God's way of dealing with this valiant and holy soul, that every fresh step she took, and at the beginning of every new work, she would be the prey to a profound and almost supernatural despondency. Few, however, judging by appearances, could have divined the mental sufferings she went through, for she was always outwardly strong, cheerful and brave in the face of the direst difficulties. So well did she know the nature of the trial that she did her best not to listen to her despondency; and her superiors and others who worked with her refused to let themselves be influenced by it, but got rather to regard it as a token of God's approval of the project in hand.

On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1845, the four Sisters took their vows. One year of peace they had, reaping what they had sown, but that was all, for peace and rest were not to be the lot of Mother Margaret and her companions. Almost as soon as they had settled down, Dr. Ullathorne was named Vicar Apostolic of the Western District, which would of course remove him from Coventry. He had twice escaped being made Bishop; but this time he had to submit, and full of trouble went into the school to break the news to Mother Margaret. Reading the trouble in his countenance, she hastily put a little child off her knee, and went to meet him. "I know what it is," said she; "you are a Bishop!"

The blow was a terrible one to the little community It was too much in a state of infancy to stand without him to whom it owed its existence; so the only thing to be done was to pull it up by the roots, in spite of all the good it was doing and promised to do, and transplant it to his diocese, at the risk of its perishing like

a half-grown tree in the process. Never had Mother Margaret felt so crushed as now. Dr. Ullathorne describes how when he left her, preparatory to going to Rome, she fell on the ground and clasped his feet with an emotion quite foreign to her. "God alone! God alone! God alone!" she wrote at the beginning of a letter penned in those dark days; and this cry, wrung by anguish from her soul, became henceforth the motto of her life and of that of her Sisters.

The anxiety consequent on the move was really very great, —all the more so as Mother Margaret found herself compelled for the first time to act for herself and on her own responsibility. At last, however, through the generosity of Mr. John Wright, a suitable house was found in Bristol into which the sisters moved, furniture for both chapel and convent being provided by the fraternal charity of various other religious orders. When the foundation was made at Bristol, the poverty of the Sisters of Penance (as Mother Margaret's community began to be called), reached its lowest ebb. However, as the proverb says, dark is before dawn, and from that moment pecuniary matters improved; for some postulants joined the community with means of their own sufficient to make life possible. They united all other requisites to this, otherwise it is certain that Mother Margaret would not for one moment have entertained the idea of accepting them. She never could bring her great soul to worry herself about ways and means. All her works were undertaken solely for God and His glory, and to Him alone did she look for support. Her belief in the efficacy of prayer, and her confidence that God would provide for those who put their trust in Him, were unbounded. This may sound like a truism, but Mother Margaret carried the principle far beyond the region of truisms. The instances when her prayers were answered in a way which may pardonably be called supernatural were numerous; for often the exact sum of money she had asked of God was sent unexpectedly, and sometimes from unknown sources.

It was this supernatural principle of turning to God

alone to support works undertaken for Him which made her almost fiercely intolerant of obtaining money by means of bazaars and kindred contrivances. The money thus obtained was worthless in her eyes. She considered the system as a desecration of the very name of charity, and as most pernicious to the souls of those who were persuaded to give their money to the poor in that way. The best way, she used to say, if we want God to be generous to us, is to be generous with Him. So, when all other means failed, and her works undertaken for the glory of God were threatened with destruction, she used to take one or more orphans into the house free of charge; and this method of obtaining pecuniary aid never failed. When a certain Religious Superior was trying to give her a lesson in finance, and explained how he was in the habit of investing the funds of the community—"Oh," said she, interrupting him, "I always invest ours in little boys and girls!"

As to postulants, her preference was for those who were as poor as she was herself. Before she died she urged the Sisters never to reject any on the score of poverty. "Remember," said she, "that your first Mother was one of the most contemptible of God's creatures, who in the world had to earn her bread in the sweat of her brow."

During the short time that the Sisters of Penance were at Bristol the little community was able to assume a more distinctly conventual character. Mother Margaret spared no pains to make them what she called true Dominicans in interior ways as well as in externals; and tried by every method to kindle fervour in the souls of her Sisters, declaring that she would rather work with one fervent religious than with a hundred who had not the right spirit. Of all forms of prayer the Divine Office was that which kindled most devotion in her, and her love for it was at once the root and fruit of her vocation as a daughter of St. Dominic. The dream of her life was that the Sisters should sing the Office in choir, for not till then would she feel them to be real Dominicans. This dream, however, did not become

a reality till within a short time of her death. When the community was first started at Coventry, the Little Office of Our Lady was daily recited, but owing to the ignorance of the sisters it had to be said in English. Now, however, in Bristol, a step in advance was made, and thanks to the training of Father Newsham, an acquaintance of one of the sisters, they learnt to sing it in Latin. So particular was Mother Margaret about its correct rendering both as to ceremony and pronunciation, that even as she lay in bed dangerously ill of typhoid fever, any mistake made caught her ear, and she tried to draw attention to it by rapping on the wall.

The history of the next twenty years of Mother Margaret's life is in reality the history of her many foundations, at which it is impossible to give more than a passing glance. In 1848, having totally failed to find a suitable and permanent house in Bristol, the convent temporarily established there was moved to Clifton, where it prospered until after she had gone to her reward. Some of the foundations, such as Bridgewater, Rhyl, and Leicester were too short-lived to need more than mention, failure being a certainty as soon as a trial had been made.

A gentleman having left Mother Margaret a legacy in order that a convent should be started in the Potteries, the foundation of Longton was made; but after a fair trial it was transferred to Stoke. Mother Margaret was glad when compelled to withdraw her sisters from the dismal place, where as she epigrammatically said, "they heard nothing but sin, and saw nothing but black mud." She was not what the world would call prudent as to ways and means, but even she was aghast when, while the debt on Clifton was unpaid, she was urged by her superiors to build a large and suitable noviciate on some ground which a benefactor enabled her to buy at Stone. However, as she said, her bank was in heaven, and, ever the child of obedience, she set about the work. Her ideas were always grand; and in 1852 the foundations were laid of a convent "such as

she had in her head." That was her crowning work, and remains till now the greatest monument to her zeal and enterprise. Two more foundations she made, at St Mary Church, Torquay, and at Bow. This last, made when she literally had one foot in the grave, was nearer to her heart than any other, partly, perhaps, because it was her last, and mostly because it was set down in London, to fight with evil on its own battle-field.

Thus she went on working for God to the very end, neither finding rest nor seeking it. "Do not talk to me of rest," she wrote in one of her letters, "I hope never to rest till I get to heaven;" and, in truth, her wish was granted. It is difficult to believe, as we follow her through her busy life, and trace her clever active brain in one work for God after the other, that she never knew what it was to feel well. Her sufferings from her girlhood upwards were most acute. While still a young servant she, taking pleasure in hearing herself called as strong as Samson, raised and carried upstairs a weight which two men hesitated to raise together. She permanently injured her back by this exploit and suffered excruciating pain to the end; though her life of ceaseless activity proved the fallacy of the physicians' verdict that she would have to lie on a sofa for the rest of her days. The injury produced a tendency to internal abscesses, which not only caused her real agony at times, but also poisoned her blood, so that at last she had no sound spot on her body, except her face, which was left untouched and unmarred. But not even when these terrible abcesses formed did she cease her work for a single day. One morning a Sister entered the Mother's cell to ask for some relaxation on the score of indisposition. Unperceived herself, she saw the Mother engaged in washing her wounds, while she prayed aloud for strength to get through the duties and fatigues of the day. Needless to say the Sister retired, ashamed to ask for the desired dispensation.

She bore the burden and heat of the day under these circumstances till she was in her sixty-fifth year, when

her sufferings had increased to such a degree that she could conceal them no longer. Still she never sought for sympathy and compassion, but turned to God alone. "All is good for the soul," said she in writing; "and it is a strange pleasure to say to Our Lord from time to time, 'You and you only know what this miserable carcase goes through'"—words which cast a side-light on the ruling motto of her life and extend to it the additional meaning of "alone with God." "God must be very near when we can feel the thorns with which He is crowned," were favourite words of hers. In November 1867, seeing that she could scarcely drag herself about, but quite oblivious as to the extent of her maladies, Dr. Ullathorne ordered her to take a fortnight's complete rest in bed. She obeyed, but from that bed she never rose.

Mother Margaret's death was one of almost unsurpassed agony; and, wrung by pain, she constantly exclaimed that her back was breaking. Yet her vigorous humanity kept death at bay, and, as it were, forbade her soul to take its flight, for days after the doctors had pronounced that she could not live for more than a few hours. But to the end she lost neither patience nor placidity, nor did the torment she suffered make her for one moment lose the thought of God, or ignore the real meaning of death. How often, when the poor body is racked with unbearable pain, have we heard even good people cry out for death as a release from suffering; but to Mother Margaret death meant much more than that. When her sufferings were at their worst, the sense of her unworthiness overwhelmed her; and whilst physical pain could extract no cry from her, the fear of the coming judgement broke her down, and turning, full of human weakness, to the Sister attending on her, she would say piteously, "Oh, I am so frightened."

It was then, when poor human nature was suffering more than it could bear, that Almighty God hid His face from her, and left her in a state of awful desolation, What were racked frame and broken back to that? "Oh," she cried, bursting into tears, "I could bear all

the rest if it were not for this!" Truly those last days illustrate more clearly than all that had gone before, during the sixty-five years of her pilgrimage on earth, how intensely and entirely 'God alone' was the ruling thought of her life.

For six tortured months she lay on what she called "a bed of fire;" and yet never one word of murmuring broke from her. A Sister who wrote down her reminiscences of that last terrible illness said that what most struck them all was that she was "so exactly the same as when in health." "O will of God! will of God!" were the words most frequently on her lips; and also: "My God and my all!" Thus the long weeks dragged on, till on March 11, 1868, God willed her purgatory on earth to cease, and called her to Himself.

Such was Mother Margaret's life. There remain a few words to be said of what she was in herself; and by taking hold of and dwelling on a few of her leading characteristics, to show how it was that she, an ill-educated orphan, came to do the great work she did.

"God alone!" Such was her motto, closely adhered to by herself and bequeathed to her spiritual children. If the term be permissible, it may be said that the thought of God—the living and personal God—was the passion of her life. It was said that to hear her pronounce the two words, "Almighty God," was enough to kindle devotion in the soul of the hearer. Living, as she did, in His presence, face to face with Him alone, gave her that largeness and singleness of mind and soul which marked her and left its stamp on her intercourse with others. She lived without strain or effort in the presence of God. One day a Sister showed her a book of devotion which recommended the practice of beginning the day by putting ourselves in the presence of God. "What nonsense!" she exclaimed. "Why, one is never out of His presence!" The Sister, whose views were less large and high than hers, tried to explain the words as meaning that we should try to realize His presence. "I don't understand those rigmaroles,"

retorted Mother Margaret. "If you are always in His presence, how can you put yourself into it more?" "I must be a very wicked woman," she said, on another occasion, "for I get into a passion and go about scolding people, and yet I am never out of the presence of God for a single instant."

And yet, in spite of this, she was never carried away by devotion. Her prayer was always a rational effort of the will. "I have strong impulses to work for God," she explained; "and I may say that the voice of God is in a way quite clear to me at times. But I have no impulses of sensible devotion as I hear others speak of. But the last few years I feel a more close union with God, so that I am glad to go to my bed at night to be alone with Him."

From this realization of God's presence there necessarily followed a devotion to His will, which may be called the master-key of her life. It was a sort of sacrilege in her eyes to utter any complaint whatsoever. All that God sent was for the best, because it was He who sent it. Thus, whatever occurred, whether it were hot or cold, whether it rained or the sun shone, whether things prospered or whether they failed, whether the community suffered loss or whether she herself were racked with pain, her one unfailing exclamation was: "How good God is!" How living the God of her worship was to her can best be shown by the following characteristic anecdote. A Sister was trying to explain to her the tenets of Positivism, and how it places humanity in the place of God. In her desire to make clear her meaning, the Sister argued how it was possible for such tenets to be held with satisfaction to the individual. Mother Margaret first looked up to heaven, and then, turning on the speaker with a look of indignation, exclaimed, in language which may be called all her own, "He'd be but a rotten sort of God, my dear!"

Anything that seemed to encroach on the rights and prerogatives of God, and anything that looked like arrogance on the part of the creature, filled her with a sort of holy terror. When the first International Ex-

hibition was held, in 1851, and all men were full of the great things which it was to do for the world, she trembled lest such sentiments should call down the judgements of God, and certain devotions were practised in the Convent by way of reparation. So also, when shown the Menai Bridge, she, full at once of admiration and fear, exclaimed, "If men do such things as these they will begin to think they have no need of God!" She really rejoiced when she heard of the failure of some scientific enterprise, saying that she liked men to learn that God was their Master.

Her constant and simple realization of God's presence made it so difficult for her to use any fixed method of mental prayer, that after trial she gave up the attempt. When the hour fixed by the rule for prayer arrived, she knelt down and, in her own words, "looked and asked." When asked by a Sister how she ought to say the Office, and what she ought to think of while saying it, she replied, "Well, *I* just stand up before God and say it in His presence as well as I can."

Her faith in the Blessed Sacrament—usually styled by her "Our Lord" pure and simply—was vivid and realizing. "I see," said she on one occasion, "the wisdom of having screens in churches, and Our Lord raised out of reach at Exposition, for I know by myself what people might be tempted to do in moments of indiscreet fervour." And she owned one day that at Benediction she could hardly restrain herself from rushing to the altar and clasping the monstrance in her arms.

She thought of a church only as the house of God. When censorious Catholics found fault with Dr. Ullathorne for erecting a handsome church at Coventry, because there were no "respectable people" to frequent it, Mother Margaret rebuked them with a ready humour. "The church," said she, "is for God, and He is *always respectable!*" Nothing, therefore, made her more indignant than when, as too often happens, the best work and decoration in a church are bestowed on those parts which meet the eye of the worshippers,

while that which is unseen is left plain. She would have preferred to have it the other way. She could weep on many occasions, but never did her tears flow more readily than when she heard of some noble and devoted deed. Thus, she quite broke down with emotion when she heard of a church in Spain where the inside of the tabernacle was lined with precious rubies. "One thing strikes me in England," she said to some ladies with whom she was staying shortly after she left Belgium: "I see you use mahogany for your cupboards, while you keep our Lord in deal." Instances could be multiplied at will of the sorrow caused to her by this sort of stinginess. When she first visited Stoke-on-Trent she was made almost ill by the sight of a pewter chalice used for Mass, and she never rested till she was able to replace it by one of silver.

When things were at the lowest ebb, and the Sisters had not even sufficient food to eat, even then it made her angry to see any economy practised in the chapel. "We must be sparing to ourselves," said she, "but never to God." "Don't stint Almighty God," she would say. "It would be better that we should want bread than that our Lord should be neglected. As for the poor, there are many to help them, but few people think of our hidden God."

The largeness of soul engendered in her by her simple life face to face with God marked her direction of the religious under her care. The details which have reached us of this side of her life show us how true was that friend's judgement which pronounced her to be the most wonderful compound of the natural and the supernatural. We learn how in her a rare loftiness of soul, which at times reminds us of St. Teresa, could be combined with the most shrewd common sense. She had the power of government largely developed, though when the burden of it was first laid on her she shrank from its responsibility, and was grievously oppressed for long years after it was imposed on her. She was keenly alive to her deficiencies both of nature and

education, and most fully meant what she said a short time before her death: "Almighty God willed that all the work should be His, so He chose out the lowest instrument He could find, so that no one else should have any part in it. You see, He chose a sinful woman, a sickly woman—a woman without family, without friends, without education, and without reputation. If He could have chosen anything lower He would, but He could not. So the work is His from beginning to end."

Mother Margaret Hallahan was essentially a self-made woman, if indeed the term can be fitly used of one who was so evidently God-made; and the study of her career may well make us rejoice in its evidence of the powers that lie in our human nature as such, without extraneous aids. In this light it does us good to be reminded how little she owed to the usual methods of cultivation, and we are inclined to think that no most exalted higher education could produce another like her. So it is with, to say the least of it, very mixed feelings that, in letters addressed to her spiritual daughters, full of the loftiest sentiments and counsels, we find the most absurd little blunders in spelling, and read, for instance, her exhortation to crush certain temptations as if they were *nats*. Throughout her correspondence are to be found words like *simpel* and *litel*, phonetically spelt. She never properly mastered the rules of arithmetic, and, with all her multifarious and well-ordered works, kept her accounts more in head than on paper. She often and often alludes to herself as an ignoramus, and signs herself to her letters as a "good-for-nothing old Mother." Yet her powers of government were so magnificent that probably, had she been called on to rule over an empire instead of over some communities of nuns, she would have been found equal to the task.

If her method of government can be described, it would be difficult to sum it up more concisely than by her own words, used in giving directions to one who, for the first time, found herself in the position of mistress of novices: "Put solid Christianity in, and take

the nonsense out!" She had a perfect horror of what, by a coinage of words to which she was addicted, she called *shim-sham* piety—a piety which puts externals before internal reality, devotion before obedience to God, and which consisted largely in emotions. "Take no notice of feelings," said she, "they always deceive us and lead us wrong. Keep to the one principle, to seek God and serve Him in darkness or in light, and to have but one intention, God's will and God's work." She habitually discouraged over-much talk about the spiritual state, judging that it fostered unreality. One Sister came to her with bitter lamentations about her difficulties in perseverance. "Ah, child," she said, without lifting her eyes from the letter she was writing, "you'll have your ups and downs—just tell me, will you, how to write down ten thousand?" and that was all the help the Sister could extract. To another who, with a little unreality, complained that to hold a candle at a religious function distracted her thoughts from God, she said, "It is not your own satisfaction you are to seek. If it is a distraction to you to hold a candle, think you are our Lord's candlestick for the time." "God make you a saint," she said to another, adding in the same breath, "and a tough job He'll have of it!"

Her own undying valour, and the constant strain of living her life for God in spite of suffering and consequent exhaustion, made her a little severe with what she called "faddiness" on the part of any of the Sisters, a word which in her language meant the making much of little ailments, the seeking of however small indulgences, or even betraying by word or sign the existence of any indisposition or endurable pain.

Mother Margaret was one of those to whom anything of introspection and self-analysing was, even under obedience, most painful. "When forced to fix my eyes on myself," she wrote once, "I can only make a great sign of the Cross over the abyss and go on looking up to God." In another document, in which, under obedience, she tried to make some manifestation of her spiritual state, we find these words: "I get quite

stupid over it when I begin to look at myself. I have tried for the last few years to forget self in every shape, both as regards body and soul, and to keep the eye of the mind as much as possible on God in all things, and not refer to self." This being her bent, Mother Margaret was very unsparing of those in the community whose tendency was to occupy themselves unduly in self-searchings and self-contemplation. "Cease all that examination," she writes to one; "it keeps you always more busy with yourself than with God. There are innumerable wants in the Church, many souls to convert, and many indifferent Catholics who want the last grace to bring them to their duties. Think of all these things and leave yourself in the hands of God with a perfect spirit of abandonment. I should weary of myself and lose all courage were I to occupy myself with myself. Keep the eye of the soul on our only good God. Be sure it is self-love and self-seeking that is occupying you now. . . . There is but one perfect Being, God and all His works. Let us be content with our own nothingness."

None possessed to a higher degree than Mother Margaret the art of saying the right thing to the right person. Hers was no wooden system, but one varied by her according to the individual with whom she had to deal. No doubt the Sister to whom the above was written was capable of profiting by the high spirituality of the words addressed to her. In another case, however, we find her addressing a Sister with a sarcasm which was no doubt very efficacious with her, but which might have shrivelled up another. "What!" she writes, "always busy with yourself? If you could but forget there was such a nasty thing in the world! I never think of praying for you in particular, because I feel sure you never forget yourself. I have to think of those who forget themselves."

Anything like affectation or a desire to edify was abhorrent to her. There was one Sister who, in her desire to be holy, looked pious. "I never like you less," said Mother Margaret to her, "than when you are

trying to be *extra good*." "If your interior be absorbed in God, the whole exterior will show it," was her commonsense remark to one who, in the matter of recollection, was apt to put the cart before the horse, and begin by the outside. "If you *are* recollected you will *look* it."

Perhaps the greatest trial Mother Margaret ever met with in her work for souls was when, towards the end of her life, the Government began to have a hand in the management of schools. No doubt she would have held the same inconvenient opinions now had she been alive, and would have been considered as hopelessly behind the age. It was as gall and wormwood to her to receive pecuniary aid from the lineal descendants of those governments which, not so many decades back, had persecuted the Church. "Is it likely," said she, with her relentless commonsense, "that people who a few years ago would have hanged and quartered us, would now be giving us money to make our children good Catholics?" And if education were not for the purpose of making children good Catholics she could not understand what could be its object. She did not care in the least for any proficiency in secular learning; and for holding this opinion we think she might be excused by even the most ardent educationalists, for she could not but be conscious how very well she had got on with a modicum of learning.

It was, however, for her own Sisters that she most sincerely disliked the system of cramming for examinations, which was the prominent effect of the Government grant. Obedience made her put her schools under Government, but her heart ached all the same; and she really rejoiced, both for their own sake and that of their teachers, when the children failed to pass the required test. "I am glad of it," she wrote to the Superioress of a Community whose schools had thus failed: "it will teach you that you and your Sisters are nuns, not schoolmistresses." She was most severe with those Sisters who "took" the education fever, and who "could not meditate, or say a Pater or Ave without

parsing it." It may have been one of these grammatical nuns who was, in Mother Margaret's presence, examining a class about which the following story is told, which we take from the Life of her written by her spiritual daughters, which has been the basis of this little sketch. "The subject was Bible history, and one of the questions being, 'Where did Abraham come from?' a small boy called out, with some satisfaction, 'From Mesopotamia.' 'What a long word!' said Mother Margaret; 'now I'll ask him some questions.' So she asked him if he liked plum-pudding for dinner, and more to the same effect, and then left the class. The next time she came the children were repeating by heart the Latin hymns of the Blessed Sacrament, and were getting through them at a rapid rate. She sat down and asked them how much they understood of what they were saying, and then gave them a beautiful instruction on these hymns, and the reverence with which they should be recited. "It made me feel," writes the Sister who relates the anecdote, "how little I understood the spirit in which these children should be trained."

She disliked her Sisters to be in a bustle, and lead a life of "all go and do, and no food for the soul." But though she objected to fuss and hurry, she wished that they should never be idle, and liked them to be "too busy to have time for sin and selfishness." "If God is in your heart work will never drive Him out of it," was a constant maxim of hers. "Thank God," she exclaimed, "we work hard, pray hard, live hard. May it be so to the end. . . . None die before their time; and if they died of overwork and fasting, what better could they desire?"

It can be seen by some of the above anecdotes how severe and caustic Mother Margaret could be in her remarks; but what she said seldom or never left a sting behind it. As evidence of this we can cite the number of her Sisters who, when her biography was about to be written, were willing, nay anxious, to search their memories and place on record all the apparently cruel

snubs they had received at her hands. She knew what stuff each one was made of before she uttered these remarks; for the discernment of spirits was one of her gifts, and its effect was an almost unbounded influence over one and all. She knew this power of influence, and dreaded it, for it was a real grief to her if she found that any of her Sisters depended on her or were attached to her. Her gift of discernment made her know the individuality and wants of each to an unusual degree; all the same, she wished each one to be perfectly free, or, to use her own expression, "to have her tether," and to serve God as He prompted, not she. "Never lean on any one," was her maxim: "it must be God and yourself." She never leaned herself, and, in spite of her humility, never turned to others except by obedience. "I could not trust in man if I were to try," said she.

It is perhaps this last and very marked characteristic which has given rise to the erroneous notion that Mother Margaret's was a masculine nature. Never was there a greater mistake, as even the above few pages will have shown. Some of her virtues were no doubt virile, but what we are apt to call virility is in reality that higher platform of self-reliance, self-control, and endurance which belongs to one sex as much as to the other. But we may assert unchallenged that Mother Margaret's defects were very much those of a woman. She acted on her feelings in a way which is said to be essentially feminine. Reason, or anyhow what may be called reasoned-out reason, had very little to do with her undertakings, her choices, and her dislikes. She acted by a sort of instinct; and all who have read her life must admit that her instincts were very sure. While she was alive, and able to be the interpreter of her own conclusions, there were but few mistakes; but her trust in her own instincts may have caused some of the many monetary difficulties which have beset her daughters since her death. She was, by her own showing, no accountant, and though in life, by the help of God and her own rare gift of extracting timely aid from

man, she invariably got clear of all menacing embarrassments, she was unable to bequeath the secret of her success to her spiritual children.

The exterior of some people is, as it were, an outward sign of what they are within; but there was a something of reserve and humility about Mother Margaret which forebade any index to her higher gifts to appear in her outward person. The contemplation of Mother Margaret's portrait is a study in itself, for it reveals so much, and yet conceals so very much more. One who knew nothing of its subject would pronounce her to have been the exemplification of good-humoured, contented benevolence. Of her benevolence, as a leading feature of her character, there could be no doubt, though, perhaps, it belonged to her natural rather than to her supernatural virtues. It excluded no human being except those who dared to raise their heads and defy God, and it embraced the whole of the animal creation. She once consulted a doctor about a lump on her head which, though she had poulticed it, refused to yield to treatment. "Why," said he, laughing, after he had examined it, "that is your bump of benevolence;" and this story might go far towards establishing the accuracy of phrenological assertions. Moreover, in spite of the severity of her life and her constant sufferings she was decidedly stout. "The doctor tells me I am getting fat," she wrote from Malvern, whither she had gone to take the waters on the unique occasion in her life when she was persuaded to pay attention to her health. "It will be a cure for vanity, and a punishment for all rash-judgement; for I always had a dislike to fat priests and nuns. I have a comfort that there are some fat saints in heaven. St. Thomas Aquinas was very fat; and I think it is the mark of a true Dominican." This "fatness" then, besides being a mortification, was as a cloak of humility to her; and by enduing her with a look of general placid content, cast a veil over her which hid from the eyes of the world both the favours which she received from God,

and the heroism with which she suffered for His sake. "God alone" could not have been so wholly her motto had any one been able to guess how intensely He was all in all to her.

One of those who knew her in life has thus summed up her character in a few words: "Mother Margaret was a *wonderful* woman—the most extraordinary combination of the natural and supernatural that ever lived"; and it cannot be rash to say that therein lay the key to the secret of her influence. It has been said with great truth, though perhaps with some temerity, that to be a real saint requires genius as well as sanctity. In the light of this judgement we may say that though Mother Margaret was no saint in the ordinary acceptation of the word, still she possessed to a very marked degree the stuff for the making of a saint, and was, though of course in an inferior degree, made of the same material which God fashioned into a St. Catherine and a St. Teresa.

DOM MAURICE CHAUNCY
AND
BROTHER HUGH TAYLOR,
CARTHUSIAN MONKS.

By Dom Lawrence Hendricks,
Monk of the same Order.

Maurice Chauncy, born about the year 1513, was the eldest son of John Chauncy, of Pishiobury, near Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, and Elizabeth, daughter of John Proffit, of Barcombe, in Sussex. Sir Henry Chauncy, great-great-grandson of Maurice's brother, gives, in his *Antiquities of Hertfordshire*, some particulars regarding the family, whose pedigree is traced through many generations from Chauncy de Chauncy, near Amiens, who came over to England with William the Conqueror, in 1066, and whose name is in the famous roll of Battle Abbey, near Hastings.

After passing some time in the University of Oxford, where he does not appear to have taken a degree, Maurice became a law-student at Gray's Inn, in London. Sir Henry Chauncy says that Maurice, during his residence at Gray's Inn, paid a visit to his father at Pishiobury, intending to spend Christmas there. He was dressed in the gay attire of the young men of London in the reign of Henry VIII., and his father, a quiet country gentleman and no lover of finery, expressed his dislike of it. The son, so the story goes, "immediately resented it, and returned to London, where he fell into a contrary humour. He laid aside his glorious apparel, exchanged Gray's Inn for a monastery, took upon him the Carthusian habit, and became a monk in a house of that Order, now called the Charterhouse or Sutton's Hospital, where he applied his study to divinity." However all this may

be, it is certain that Maurice Chauncy presented himself as a postulant at the London Charterhouse when he was hardly twenty years of age, and received the white habit of the Carthusian Order from the hands of Blessed John Houghton, the Prior.

It may easily be gathered from Maurice Chauncy's own writings, that he was a very fervent novice, and became a thorough monk in a short time. The efforts he makes to escape notice when the events recorded might turn to his praise, and the open avowal of his fall, which took place under extenuating circumstances, demonstrate his humility. He calls himself an unworthy brother, a Saul among the prophets, a Judas among the apostles, a child of Ephraim turning back in the day of battle. All this, of course, he wrote some years later, but he must needs have laid a firm foundation of virtue at the beginning of his monastic life; for during the persecution which began almost immediately after his year of probation was over, he—though the youngest in the community and not yet a priest—distinguished himself among the bravest in resisting for a long time the monstrous claim of Henry VIII. to the title of Head of the Church. Then again, none but a truly devout religious could love his monastery as Maurice Chauncy loved the London Charterhouse. He calls it his mother, and speaks in glowing terms of the few happy years which he spent within its walls; and when at last he fell, it was, as will be seen later on, in no small measure due to this great love for the house of his holy profession.

It is not at all surprising that the young monk, endowed as he was with a generous disposition, made rapid progress in the way of monastic perfection, with such superiors and such companions as he found in the London Charterhouse. The Prior, the Vicar, the Procurator, and many others were unconsciously preparing themselves, by the practice of every virtue proper to their holy state, for a painful and glorious death, and were destined to be known and honoured throughout the Church Catholic among the martyred Saints of England. Chauncy's spiritual guide seems to have

been Blessed William Exmew, John Houghton's worthy Vicar; and under his direction he wrote a treatise, entitled, *An Epistle of Private Counsel.* Sir Henry Chauncy saw the manuscript which, we fear, has since been lost.

Chauncy's life in the Charterhouse was that of all Carthusian cloister monks, at least during the first years of their monastic life. He dwelt in a little cottage called a "cell," a description of which has already been given in *The Carthusian Martyrs** as well as in larger works. He rose every night for the "Great Watch," singing and praying for hours in the holy choir, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. In his cell, he devoted his time to vocal and mental prayer, to study and to manual work, in the spirit of obedience, penance and mortification, with the intention of glorifying God and the Church triumphant, of obtaining every heavenly blessing for himself and for the whole Church militant, and consolation and rest for the Church suffering in purgatory.†

Leaving the youthful cloister monk, Dom Maurice Chauncy, to commune with God in the solitude of his cell, we will now turn to the *Conversus* or professed lay brother, Hugh Taylor, who distinguished himself by his virtues and by the evident efficacy of his prayers, even in the midst of such holy companions as were the lay brothers of the London Charterhouse, six of whom were destined to gain the martyr's palm, and receive the honours of the Blessed. Chauncy tells us something of the "great perfection and simplicity of the lay brothers." "They were," he says in his *Historia*, "*Conversi*, not merely in name, but in very deed; wholly converted from the world to God, most obedient sons, dearest brothers, faithful servants, full of fatherly affection, most attentive to the cloister monks (to whom they

* Published by C.T.S., price one penny.

† Many particulars regarding the life and spirit of the Carthusian Order will be found in *The Monastery of the Grande Chartreuse* (Burns and Oates), and in *The London Charterhouse, its Monks and its Martyrs* (Kegan Paul and Co).

proved no little consolation in their troubles), and intimate friends of God." We read how Almighty God blessed them with many special graces. A pious emulation as to who would excel in humility, self-denial, and other virtues suitable to their state of life was seen to exist among them; and Hugh Taylor was one of the most fervent in this holy company, though he was not, like his still more highly favoured brethren, called upon to lay down his life for the faith. He seems to have been preserved from martyrdom that he might be instrumental in the perpetuation of a remnant of the English Province of his Order—a remnant which only died out at the end of the eighteenth century.

Hugh Taylor entered the London Charterhouse in 1518. Under the able direction of Prior Tynbygh, the holy Irishman who formed the Carthusian Martyrs to monastic life and led them to heroic virtue, Brother Hugh made rapid progress in the way of perfection, and was favoured with many special graces. It is recorded that he was so pleasing to God that his prayers were well-nigh always effectual. He was wont, moreover, to give advice in all humility to those who sought his aid; and his advice was always good, for he consulted our Lord in earnest prayer before speaking.

Blessed John Houghton, the Protomartyr of King Henry's persecution, may be counted amongst those who had profited by this good lay brother's prayers and counsels. When John Houghton was the Father Sacristan of the Charterhouse, he was desirous of reverently consuming, during his Mass, a sacred particle which had been rejected by a monk who was sick of the plague; feeling however a great repugnance and fearing contagion, he thought he would ask Brother Hugh to beseech our Lord to manifest His will. The brother had already been favoured with several revelations, and all the monks knew that he was a man of God, and obtained almost all that he demanded. John Houghton then, always remarkable for his humility, had recourse to the lay brother. Hugh, with his wonted simplicity, accepted the proposal, and with most earnest

devotion he begged our dear Lord to make known His good pleasure. Hugh's prayer was heard. Rapt in ecstacy during the "Great Watch" at dead of night, he saw a procession of angels in white raiment, each bearing a lighted candle in his hand. Entering the sacristy, they went straight to the place in which the Sacristan had concealed the sacred particle. They bowed down in deepest adoration, opened the pix, and after remaining some moments in contemplation of their Lord hidden in the Sacrament of His love to men, they vanished away. When morning came, Brother Hugh asked the Sacristan if he had not placed the sacred particle he spoke of in that place. The answer being in the affirmative, Hugh told the story of his vision, and the Sacristan, fully assured by this grace, consumed the particle during his Mass; "neither," says Chauncy, "did he fear death, for he received the Author of life, nor sickness, for he received Him who healeth all our infirmities; nor did he any longer feel repugnance, for he tasted in spirit that the Lord is sweet."

Seculars were also in the habit of confiding their doubts and difficulties to Brother Hugh. One day, for instance, a young man, unable to decide whether to embrace the religious state or to marry, laid his case before him. The Brother, after recommending the matter to God, told him to get married; "for," said he, "the will of God is that you should be both a husband and a monk." Accordingly he married, and then begged his bride to give him leave to retire into a monastery. She refused, and he abandoned the project. At length, having become the father of a family, he forgot all about his attraction to the religious state. Some years elapsed, and the wife reminded her husband of his former aspirations, saying that she now wished to be a nun. Brother Hugh's prediction presented itself to his memory, and he consented to the proposal. Having provided for the education of their children with a relative, the pious couple separated, the husband becoming a Carthusian monk at the Charterhouse of Sheen, near Richmond, and the wife a Bridgettine nun at Syon, near Isleworth.

Hugh Taylor's charity was not only for the good and pious. This large-hearted lay brother was sometimes of use to those who were unworthy of his kindness. There was, unfortunately, a bad monk in the London Charterhouse, whose name was Thomas Salter. Chauncy's work on the Martyrs, the archives of the Order, and the State Papers of England all bear witness against him. Not content with rendering himself guilty of quitting the enclosure without leave on three occasions, he was noted for detraction and slander. He was always ready to speak and to write evil of his brethren, his Order, and his Prior. His letters, in which he attacks his Rule, that he did not choose to observe, and his Superior, Blessed John Houghton, whom he could not appreciate, are still extant. It is moreover to be feared that he once laid violent hands upon the holy Prior. Even this wretched man found a friend in need in Brother Hugh Taylor, for it appears that, divine grace having at length abandoned Thomas Salter, the devils were permitted to vex and beat him; and had they not been put to flight by the charitable and earnest prayers of a lay brother, they would probably have killed him. It is believed on good authority that this pious lay brother was none other than Hugh Taylor.

The details of the troubles which befel the monks of the London Charterhouse belong for the most part to the history of the Martyrs; and in order not to repeat what has already been written more than once, we must take it for granted that the reader has some knowledge of them. Suffice it then to say that Maurice Chauncy was an eye-witness of and a partaker in the sorrows and perplexities of the community. In the spring of 1534, he saw his holy Prior and the Procurator, Father Humphrey Middlemore, led off to the Tower; and he was present at the meetings in the Chapter-house which followed their liberation and return to the monastery. His name is in the list of those who, on the 6th of June, 1534, took the Oath of Succession under the condition *as far as it was lawful*. In this, it will be remembered, he followed the advice of Blessed John Houghton, who

had himself taken that oath before being set free from the Tower. Hugh Taylor's name is not in that list, nor is it to be found in any of the documents relating to the persecution. It is impossible to say whether he was sent to another Charterhouse, or whether he contrived to absent himself without being missed when Cromwell, Bedyll, and the other agents of King Henry's tyranny held their conferences in the Chapter-house. However this may be, Brother Hugh was neither a martyr nor an apostate. Without compromising his conscience, he was preserved by Divine Providence for the work he had afterwards to perform.

Chauncy took part in the solemn *triduum* by which the monks prepared to suffer and to die for the faith, and to his pen we are indebted for what we know of the touching scene of mutual reconciliation, and for many other details regarding the trials and glorious death of the eighteen Carthusian Martyrs.

After the execution of the second three martyrs, in June 1535, Chauncy, though still young, distinguished himself among the bravest of the monks, who besides being proof against all the temptations they had to encounter, and models of patience under the dreadful hardships imposed upon them by the lay Commissioners who took charge of the Charterhouse, encouraged the weaker brethren to continue their resistance. The humble Chauncy does not say that he was one of the four whom the Royal Commissioners deemed incorrigible Papists, and whom they got rid of in the hope that, without their aid, the others would be induced to surrender their consciences and swear to the King's new title of Head of the Church. The State Papers put it beyond a doubt that these four were Blessed John Rochester, Blessed James Walworth, Father John Fox, and our hero, Maurice Chauncy. On the 4th of May, 1536 (the anniversary of their Prior's martyrdom), these four monks were sent to two other houses of their Order. The two future martyrs went to the Charterhouse by Hull, Fox and Chauncy to that of Beauvale, in Nottinghamshire.

In August of the following year, 1537, Henry Man, the unworthy Prior of Sheen, who afterwards became a Protestant Bishop, and John Mitchel, Prior of Witham, who had been "turned and satisfied" by Lee, Archbishop of York, visited the Charterhouse of Beauvale. Man had become the Visitor and Mitchel the Assistant Visitor of the English Charterhouses, not according to the rules and customs of the Order, but by royal appointment. Since the imprisonment and martyrdom of Blessed Robert Lawrence, their Prior, most of the monks of Beauvale had been induced to acknowledge the King's alleged right to be head of the Church of England. The Visitors found amongst those who still held out, Fox and Chauncy, who had now been there over fifteen months. These two monks being very desirous to return to the house of their profession, where no doubt they hoped to find at least some of their former companions still true to the Catholic faith, the Visitors granted their request and sent them back to London. They were not, however, allowed to return at once to the Charterhouse, for it was thought proper to pervert them before they rejoined their brethren. So, not unwisely, they were sent to the Bridgettine Fathers at Syon, where Copinger was "Confessor General." This friar, who left the Church the first time heresy was preached, had subsequently been persuaded by Cromwell and Stokesley, Bishop of London, to accept the spiritual supremacy of Henry VIII., and it was hoped that he would be able to induce the two Carthusians to take the oath. He had already been successful with regard to some of their brethren. The state of mind of Fox and Chauncy at this time may be gathered from the following letter from the Visitors to Father Copinger:—

"To the good and religious Father, Master Copinger, General Confessor at Syon.

"Father Confessor, in our Saviour Jesus be your salvation. We have sent to you our brethren Fox and Chauncy, to whom we beseech you to show your charity,

as you have done to divers others of our brethren before this. They be very scrupulous in the matter concerning the Bishop of Rome, but they be not obstinate. We trust you shall find them reasonable and tractable, for they be much desirous to have your counsel, and to speak with you *facie ad faciem*. Each of them hath a book wherein be such authorities as they do lean unto. We pray you hear all that they will propose, and thereto make such answers as your learning and wisdom shall move you. We were purposed to have reasoned with them in every point contained in their books; but their desire was so much to speak with you, and to be removed from the house where they were, that we thought it good to condescend to their request, and not to spend so long time with them, for we had much business with certain others, as they can tell you. Therefore, good Father, for the love that you have to God's honour and the King's, to the wealth of their souls, and to the honesty of our religion, help to remove their scruples, as our trust is that you will. We pray you recommend us to our good mother, Lady Abbess, desiring her good will and furtherance herein. And we shall see that such cost as they shall put your house to shall be recompensed by the grace of Jesus, who augment His grace in you.

"From the Charterhouse of Beauvale, the last day of August [1537], your loving brethren in God,

"HENRY MAN } Visitors of that Order
"JOHN MITCHEL } assigned by the King's grace."

At Syon House, Chauncy and his companion must have learnt the fate of the ten monks who, having refused the oath, were cast into Newgate to die of hunger and filth. They were told, moreover, how the others, by taking the oath, had preserved the Charterhouse from destruction. But the Charterhouse, they heard, was still in danger of being suppressed, unless they would add their consent to that of their brethren, for the submission of all the monks was required. The two monks continued their resistance for a time, and then, alas,

they fell. Stifling as best they could the voice of conscience, they took the heretical oath. In their hearts they disapproved of the words which outwardly they pronounced, pleading for excuse their duty to return to the Charterhouse and observe their vow of stability, which obliges Carthusian monks to dwell in the house of their profession unless holy obedience ordain otherwise. Bitterly did Father Chauncy weep during the remaining years of his long life over this one blot upon the history of his career. He makes no excuses for his weakness, and even endeavours to hide from his readers the fact that he and Father Fox were the last of all who fell, and that they fell under extenuating circumstances. They had not, as their brethren had in the previous May, the bright example before them of the ten who were willing to die. They seemed to be standing out alone in the face of an apostate nation. Yet Chauncy makes no such excuses for his conduct, but with deepest humility he urges his unworthiness to be called or deemed a member of the community of the London Charterhouse. Thus Chauncy the penitent is by no means the least edifying of our old English Carthusians.

It was about the end of November, 1537, when Chauncy, with a guilty conscience and an anxious heart, returned to the London Charterhouse. He and his companions endeavoured to console themselves by the thought that, by their concession, they had regained the King's favour and preserved the monastery from destruction. But they were mistaken. Less than a year elapsed, and they were all driven out with a wretched pension of five pounds a year for each monk, and unable to continue their monastic life, unless they could escape beyond the seas in spite of the law which forbade unauthorized going abroad.

Father Chauncy and Brother Taylor, the latter of whom we have lost sight of during the persecution, seem to have been the first of the English Carthusians to leave their native land in order to resume their habit and their Rule. Shortly after the suppression of the London Charterhouse, in November, 1538, they made

their way to Bruges, where they were kindly received by their Flemish brethren at the Charterhouse of Val-de-Grâce. There Chauncy wrote his famous history of the Martyrs. A few years later, he was permitted to make a second profession of vows, and was appointed Sacristan of the monastery. This second profession after removing to another Charterhouse was formerly a custom of the Carthusian Order, and it entitled those who made it to enjoy the privileges of the professed monks of the house. The General Chapter of 1547 authorized the Prior and convent of Bruges to admit the English refugees to the second profession.

Fifteen or sixteen years in the Flemish Charterhouse prepared Father Chauncy for the arduous duties of the remainder of his life. At length, early in 1555, he received instructions from the Grande Chartreuse to return home and endeavour to re-establish the Order, for England had returned to the Catholic faith. Father John Fox, who had followed him to Bruges, and Brother Hugh Taylor were to be his companions. The three monks arrived in London at the end of May, and were very kindly received by Sir Robert Rochester, brother of Blessed John Rochester the Carthusian Martyr. Sir Robert, who was Comptroller of the Queen's household, allotted to them some apartments in the Savoy; and as soon as a favourable opportunity presented itself, he introduced them to Cardinal Pole, and afterwards to Queen Mary. Both Queen and Cardinal assured the monks that one of their Charterhouses should shortly be restored. In the meantime they were to be provided for in the Savoy at her Majesty's expense.

On the 24th of July, 1556, Father John Fox died of a fever, and was interred in the Savoy Chapel. Chauncy then wrote to the Grande Chartreuse asking for another monk to be his companion, and Father Richards, late of St. Anne's Charterhouse, near Coventry, was accordingly sent over to England. Since his escape beyond the seas, he had made a second profession in a Dutch *Karthuiserklooster*, as Carthusian monasteries are called in Holland, and had been appointed Vicar there. Only

five weeks after his return to England, he died, and was buried in the Savoy Chapel beside his predecessor John Fox. This was a sad trial for Chauncy, and had he not been encouraged to persevere by the Cardinal and Sir Robert Rochester, he would probably have abandoned all hope of restoration and returned to Flanders. But, as is often the case, it was just when all hope seemed to be lost that success was drawing nigh. It became known throughout England that some Carthusians were living in the Savoy with the hope of re-establishing a house of their Order, and many monks who, since the suppression of their respective Charterhouses, had been living in the world, desired to become members of Chauncy's community. They flocked in from all sides; and the inconveniences which result from lack of proper accommodation now took the place of the difficulties arising from want of members. Besides, the Savoy was not a monastery, and regular observance of the Rule there was quite impossible. Cardinal Pole then took the matter seriously in hand, and before the end of the year the monks were able to remove to the Charterhouse of Sheen, near Richmond.

Maurice Chauncy and his community took possession of the Charterhouse of Sheen in November, 1556, just eighteen years after the suppression of that of London, followed soon after by that of all the other houses of the English Province. It seems to have been taken for granted that Chauncy was to be the Superior, and in Cardinal Pole's official letters, dated the 31st of December, he is appointed Prior, "in consideration of his faith, his learning, and other manifold virtues and deserts." The Cardinal exceeded his powers on the occasion, for even an Archbishop and a Papal Legate should not install a Prior without consulting the General Chapter or the Father General of the Order; and when the Chapter met in the spring, while confirming Chauncy's election to the priorate, and thanking his Eminence for his kindness, they did not fail to mention their conviction that no derogation of the privileges of the Order was intended.

Several of the monks had, like their Prior, been weak during the persecution under Henry VIII. Two of them must be mentioned in passing: Father John Mitchel, late Prior of Witham, whom we have seen as Assistant Visitor by royal appointment, and Father John Wilson, late Prior of Mount Grace, in Yorkshire, whose fall was due, as the State Papers show, to the continued efforts of Archbishop Lee. Lee had always been on terms of warm friendship with the Carthusians, and thus had a considerable influence upon them even after his lamentable fall.

The community at Sheen had not long enjoyed their solitude and silence, edifying all who knew them by their piety and fervour in the service of God, when the death of Queen Mary and Cardinal Pole gave the signal for new troubles. The Princess Elizabeth had declared with oaths—which by the way were pretty common with her—that she was a Catholic; but she soon lent a willing ear to her Protestant tempters, who urged upon her the expediency of renouncing the authority of the Holy See. To acknowledge the claims of the Pope was, they reminded her, equivalent to admitting that she was not born in lawful wedlock, and could therefore have no hereditary right to the crown. The office of head of the Church, a strange one indeed for one of her sex, had also its attractions for this ambitious woman, who even refused to have a husband or an heir lest she should be obliged to share her power and glory with another. But we must not dwell upon the character of "Good Queen Bess." Whatever her motives may have been, it was clear that the short-lived revival of the true religion was at an end, and that mutilated Christianity, with all its contradictions, its changes, and its divisions, was about to be enforced by law.

Father Chauncy saw that it was time to seek another home for his monks, and, through the influence of the Duke of Feria, he obtained leave for them to quit the kingdom without being molested. Still Chauncy was loth to abandon the Charterhouse of Sheen; and he determined, somewhat indiscreetly, to pay a visit to the

court, in the forlorn hope of being allowed to stay. It is said that, but for the interference of good Brother Hugh, this visit would have got Chauncy into trouble: the lay brother simply took his Prior by the shoulder and led him out of the royal precincts. The whole community went over to Flanders a few days later, where most of them were received in the Charterhouse of Bruges. They were supported partly by Philip II., King of Spain, and partly by some charitable English Catholics, the Duchess of Feria, great-niece of Blessed Sebastian Newdigate, being a special benefactress. Without her aid they would have been unable to pay for their board in the Flemish Charterhouse, for the Spanish pension came very irregularly.

A few years later, in 1561, Father Chauncy became Prior, by order of the General Chapter, notwithstanding his being a foreigner. His second profession, during his former stay at the Charterhouse of Bruges, made the appointment less astonishing to the Flemish monks; yet we cannot be surprised that they found it rather hard to see their house filled even to inconvenience with English monks, and one of them in the Prior's stall. The English, moreover, wished to remain distinct from the Flemings, and to have a novitiate of their own, for they always entertained the hope of soon being able to return to England. It appears from the reports of the General Chapters of the Order that these things gave rise to some little misunderstanding in the community. In 1562, Chauncy is reminded that his officers should, if possible, be Flemings, or at least that they should be thoroughly acquainted with the language of the country; and in 1568 a separation is authorized. Prior Chauncy is to look for a suitable house for the English Carthusians. The charity of several other voluntary exiles from England, and of some foreign friends, including the Holy Father, St. Pius V., enabled Father Chauncy to avail himself of the permission of the General Chapter, and in the following year a house in St. Clare's Street, Bruges, was ready for the English Carthusians. Chauncy then resigned the priorate of the Flemish Charterhouse,

and resumed his former title of Prior of Sheen. From this time until their final suppression, 1783, the English Carthusians, whenever they had a house of their own, called it *Sheen Anglorum*, and used the seal of Jesus of Bethlehem. This seal is now, through the kindness of Mr. C. M. Berington of Little Malvern Court, the property of the new English Charterhouse of St. Hugh of Lincoln, in Sussex.

The English Carthusians lived in St. Clare's Street, Bruges, for over nine years, observing their holy Rule in peace and tranquillity. In 1572, Chauncy published an edition of Dom Peter Sutor's treatise, *De Vita Cartusiana*. The old country, and the speedy re-establishment of the Catholic religion and the Carthusian Order there, were always present to the minds of the exiled monks. These ideas provided them with matter for conversation as well as for prayer. A member of the community, Father John Suertis, will give us, in his own quaint way, an illustration of this:—"It chanced the same time [about 1571] that Sir Francis Englefield with other strangers dined with Father Maurice. Sir Francis asked Father Maurice of Father Norton's vision, how it was? Father Maurice said: Father Norton was Prior of Mount Grace, a monastery of our holy Order in Yorkshire, a very godly man, and the last Prior there save Prior Wilson. Our Blessed Saviour did appear unto him divers times visibly, as it pleased Him. This was in King Henry the Eighth's days, when England was infected with Martin Luther's doctrine, and King Henry dissolved all religious houses. Our Lord spoke to Prior Norton and said: 'Thy nation doth begin to refuse Me. and pull down all religion. What sayest thou now unto this?' He said, 'Blessed Lord, I can say nothing, but desire grace and mercy from Thee.' Our Saviour answered, 'I have done for you all that I could, and I have given you a golden button as one friend doth to another; this is, I have given them a free will that they may amend if they will, if they will not, they shall find My justice. As they amend with Me, so I will amend with them.' 'Yet, Blessed Saviour,' said Prior Norton,

'I beseech Thy mercy and grace for this holy Order.' 'In that,' said He, 'I will hear thee; *for the time shall come that where there was one house of your Order there shall be three.*'

"Then," continues Father Suertis, "Sir Francis began to say that his tenants in England had written unto him that they, dwelling near Sheen, heard for nine nights together the monks that Father Chauncy had buried in Sheen to have sung service with light in the church: and when they did of purpose set ladders to the church walls, to see them in the church, suddenly they ceased. And they heard Father Fletcher's voice, which every one knew, above them all."

Suertis tells us that he asked Brother Hugh Taylor whether Father Norton's vision was worthy of credit. "Yes," said he, "it is most true." And he added that "our Blessed Saviour had said unto him in a Divine vision, *that there should be yet thirty-three Charterhouses in England*." If we count a short-lived foundation at Totnes, and the Scotch Charterhouse at Perth, Hugh Taylor's thirty-three houses will agree with Prior Norton's three to one.

A few more words must be said here regarding Brother Hugh, for he died in the temporary *Sheen Anglorum* at Bruges. Hugh Taylor was a true contemplative, but—as is generally the case—he was quite able to apply himself to active work. When he was well advanced in years and ripe for heaven, he still held the office of Procurator, for as long as Brother Hugh lived Father Chauncy would never have another. The Procurator should be a cloister monk, but the exception to the general rule which was made in Brother Hugh's case did not offend or displease anybody: "he was so charitable to all men." It is recorded that good Brother Hugh was favoured with many Divine visions. He lived, so to speak, on familiar terms with our Blessed Lord; but he never sought in these favours an excuse for idleness, nor a pretext for refusing to render himself useful to all. The *Ephemerides Cartusienses* tell us that one day, after promising to help

another lay brother with some work at a certain hour, Brother Hugh applied himself to mental prayer in his cell. Our Lord appeared, and held sweet conversation with His faithful servant. At length the hour for work came, and the apparition still continued. What was Brother Hugh to do? Was not so signal a favour enough to excuse him from the fulfilment of his promise? The holy man did not reason thus, but begging his Divine Guest to excuse him, he hastened to the workshop. When the work was completed, Hugh returned to his cell, where he found the heavenly apparition still present, and had the consolation of hearing these words: "Hugh, the duty that thou hast just performed has pleased Me more than anything thou hast done hitherto, for thou hast renounced the enjoyment of My sensible presence in order to aid thy brother."

Father Suertis mentions another remarkable vision with which Hugh Taylor was favoured. "He told me once," says Suertis, "our Saviour, in a vision, called him; saying, 'Hugh, dost thou love Me?' 'Yea, Blessed Lord,' said he, 'I love Thee with all my heart.' Then our Lord in the figure of His humanity reached him His foot, which he reverently kissed. 'Ask of Me,' said our Blessed Lord, 'what thou wilt, and thou shalt have it.' 'I will ask nothing but what pleases Thee, Blessed Lord,' said Hugh. Then our Lord said, 'I promise thee I will do more for thee than for any mortal man in the world now living.' And so, suddenly He was gone." Nobody knows what this promise was. Suertis thought it might be the preservation of a remnant of the English Carthusians; and had not that remnant ceased to exist towards the close of the eighteenth century, we should be inclined to think so too. It would indeed be very interesting if the present Carthusians of England could claim to be descended through Maurice Chauncy from the Martyrs of the London Charterhouse. But it is not so. That line ended with Father Francis Williams, who died in 1797. Perhaps it might seem rash to hope that the promise made to Brother Hugh

will be realized in the foundation of the thirty-three British Charterhouses. A great many vocations both to the cloister and to the state of the lay brothers would be required before that could be accomplished.

Having suffered exile, poverty, and many hardships and contradictions for his fidelity to the Catholic religion and to his holy vocation, Hugh Taylor died on the 30th of September, 1575. The obituary of the General Chapter held at the Grande Chartreuse in the following spring, contains the word of commendation, which is so rare in the Order that those who receive it may almost be considered to have been judged worthy of canonization—"who lived fifty-seven years in the Order in a praiseworthy manner (*laudabiliter*)."

The loss of Brother Hugh was a great trial for Father Chauncy, but we may be sure he bore it well. It appears from a letter of Cardinal Allen's, which is printed in the Introduction to the *Douay Diaries*, that about this time Chauncy wrote to the Cardinal to express his dislike of the secular disguises of the priests on the English mission. These disguises were absolutely necessary in order to escape the vigilance of the pursuivants at least for a time, and work for the salvation of souls. It is not surprising, however, that Chauncy should have been shocked at such deception until the reason for it had been fully explained to him. He had learned Carthusian simplicity from the lips of the Blessed Martyrs, John Houghton and William Exmew. At Syon House, in 1537, he had forgotten this lesson and been guilty of dissimulation, and his unhappy fall was ever present to his memory. For forty years he had been doing penance for that moment of weakness, and his trials were not yet over; more troubles, more cares, more labours were in store for him before he could join the martyrs in their heavenly home.

In 1578, the peace of the little English Charterhouse in St. Clare's Street, Bruges, was disturbed by the arrival of a detachment of the army of the Prince of Orange. Father John Suertis was Sacristan, and one of his duties being to recite in the church, before the

Blessed Sacrament, those portions of the Divine Office which the other monks say in their cells, he was alone there when his story begins. It is too curious and important to be abridged, and Suertis' old-fashioned English makes it all the more interesting. So we will let him speak:—

"I was," he says, "saying the Prime of the day, and suddenly came in a well elderly man, nothing like a soldier, nor anything in his hand, a black hat on his head, a fustian white doublet, and a pair of white stockings, and said never a word, but took off his hat when he was within the choir door, and went right up before me to the high altar, looking here and there, and went directly to the deacon's table, where I had got five chalices for the altars. He took them all in his arms and went unto the priest's chair, took off the cushion, opened the coffer under the cushion, put in all the chalices, and covered all over with the cushion again, went out on the other side of the choir, looking on me, and as he went out put to the choir door. Then, straight the soldiers rapped at the gates, and cried, *'Ouvre la porte! ouvre la porte!'*

"They came in two and two with their swords in their hands and their pieces charged, and went round about the choir, but took nothing besides a purificating cloth for the chalice. They went forth of the church, opened my cell door and went in, and sat round and about my cell. I, coming into my cell, asked them what they would have. They said apples, and so sat and drank. So I went to Father Prior's cell door and told him what they would have. He brought forth a great salmon pasty, and I gave it them. They went into the court, and divided it amongst them. Then, they seeing Father Prior themselves, three of them came to him and promised him to bring twelve of the honestest men amongst them for to keep his from all harm: the rest, they said, were all naught. So they did. Yet the rest would not consent before they had drunk with the Prior. Then all the companies came in, and drank first one barrel of beer, then another, so that

they left not one drop in the house. When all was gone, two went into the brewer's and fetched in a fresh barrel for themselves. They permitted us only to say private Masses. They had the refectory, we the church. They remained with us in this manner about six weeks, and were all very well treated.

"Father Prior asked me what became of the chalices; so I told him of the old man, and I desired he would reward him for his good will, thinking he had been a soldier. But when Father Maurice had desired of the captains that this man might be brought unto him, both they and all the soldiers protested that there was no such man amongst them all that was clothed with a white doubtlet and white stockings, for all the soldiers had buff coats.

"Notwithstanding the good and fair usage they had, they all conspired with their captains to have killed us all.* And the same day that they had given their soldiers the watchword—there was nothing but crying *Sa! sa! sa!* that night—at five of the clock after Evensong, the Spaniards came to fight beside Bruges. So they all marched forth of Bruges to fight them. But so they fought that the Spaniards left not one of them alive. After which victory, the magistrates were so grieved that they sent word to Father Prior to be gone within twenty days; else he and all the house should be burned without mercy. This was cold news unto us all. Father Prior went and prostrated himself before them all, but he could get no mercy. So he sold all things at random, and paid all debts. And on St. George's Day, the first waggons went with Father Vicar [Roger Thompson] and half the convent; and the last day, Father Prior with the other part of the convent.

"For the packing up of all the stuff," Father Suertis continues, "the magistrates of Bruges sent their packer, and one of their sixteen men to see the packing

* Those men or some of their comrades had murdered twelve monks of the Charterhouse of Ruremond a few years before. The victims are looked upon as martyrs, but their cause has not yet been examined at Rome.

of everything, for they feared that we should carry bullets and shots unto the enemies; and on every pack was set the Prince of Orange's great seal. This favour they showed.

"When we were at our gates to take our waggon, God knows how many weeping eyes both of rich and poor there were, and even the best of all the city. We came that night to a poor place of a house where the waggoners were wont to roost, but for beds, all the way we took great patience, and were in great danger of the enemies. The next night we came unto Lille, where we found all our brethren in good health," *i.e.*, those who had left Bruges some days before with the Father Vicar. "When we should go to supper, came all the heretics of the whole city, and had almost rifled our packs. Our host stood very stoutly in our defence for life and death. When they saw the Prince of Orange's seal on everything, they were appeased; but we rose early in the morning, by good counsel, and so escaped the danger they proposed.

"The next day, at night, we came to Douay. They did let us in at the gates; but none dared to receive us to lodging. So we sat in our waggons two or three hours in the streets; and at last two poor sisters bid us come into the house and we should be welcome. . . And when we were in the midst of supper, the captain with the soldiers came, and would see our passport. So it was read, and they departed, and willed us to be gone at four o'clock in the morning. So we did.

"The next night we should have lodged at Cambray, and word came that if we came there we should be cut to pieces. So we went beyond Cambray an English mile, and lay on boards in great fear of the enemy. Then we went from thence unto St. Quintin's in France, on a Sunday. There we stood about three hours without the walls, for it was the law not to open the gates to any one without license. When we understood this, Father Prior sent Thomas Evans and John Story unto the magistrates to speak for us, that we might enter. . . When the magistrates had heard of the matter, they

were glad thereof, and appointed Chanon to bring us in. When we were well settled, came the Dean and other venerable priests to salute Father Maurice and the convent, and gave him a good alms. We were there a month and more, and very well used. And from thence we came to a house of our Order beside Renaud, called St. Ludovick's House. There we were another month and more. Thence Father Prior went to Don John of Austria to speak for us, and we stayed there till he sent for us to Louvain."

Prior Chauncy obtained from Don John of Austria, who was Governor of the Netherlands, a letter of introduction to Father Peter de Merica, Prior of the Charterhouse of St Mary Magdalen under the Cross, at Louvain, where there were a number of unoccupied cells. Furnished with this letter, Chauncy presented himself at Louvain, and was allowed to take possession of the empty cells and prepare them for the reception of his community. He then sent for the monks, who, after many more sufferings and dangers, entered the Louvain Charterhouse on the 17th of July, 1578.

At this time Chauncy's community were twenty in number, eighteen cloister monks and two lay brothers. The good Prior had buried, at Bruges, nearly all the seniors. Father Nicholas Dugmer, a former monk of Beauvale, and Father Nicholas Balland, late of Hinton, died shortly after the arrival of the community at Louvain; and then Chauncy was the only Carthusian who remembered the English Province of his Order before Henry VIII. had performed his work of destruction.

The English Carthusians had not long been settled at Louvain, when they lost their friend and benefactor Don John of Austria, who died on the 1st of October, 1578. The Flemish Prior then refused to supply them with food, for he feared they might be unable to pay for it. In those days every Charterhouse was obliged to be self-supporting, and their resources were often very limited. The presence, moreover, in his monastery of a community which remained altogether out of

his jurisdiction was not likely to be pleasing to him. It is said also that Dom Peter de Merica was by nature rather "a hard man." Had it not been for the kindness of some of the English Catholics, exiled for conscience' sake, particularly Lady Hungerford and Sir Francis Englefield, the community would have been dispersed in various foreign houses of the Order.

In 1579, Father Bernard Carasse, Prior of the Grande Chartreuse and General of the Carthusian Order, granted some special privileges to Father Chauncy. He calls him "Visitor of England," and promises him a full *monachatus* * and a Mass of Our Lady throughout the Order. He then adds that after his death, by a more ample privilege, a prayer for the repose of his soul will be said in the Chapter-house after Prime on all Sundays and Festivals, not only in the English Charterhouse abroad, where ever it may be, but also in all Charterhouses that may be restored or founded in England.

Father Chauncy was sixty-seven years old when, in February, 1580, he undertook a journey to Spain. He wished to inform the King of the great needs of his community in the hope of obtaining a more liberal grant, for, notwithstanding the kindly aid of the Holy Father, Pope Gregory XIII., and several other charitable friends, the English Carthusians were in continual danger of being separated for want of sufficient means of support. A journey from Louvain to Madrid was long and fatiguing in those days, and Chauncy was old and infirm. He was taken ill in the Charterhouse of Paular, near Segovia in Castile, and was obliged to remain there for three months. A few lines from a letter from the Prior of Paular, Father Bernard de Castro, to the English monks at Louvain will perhaps be interesting. They show that Chauncy's visit made a good impression on the Spanish Carthusians. "Father Maurice," says Dom Bernard, whose letter is in Latin, "Father Maurice, so venerable on account of his advanced age and the

* A *monachatus* consists of a number of Masses, psalms, and prayers to be celebrated or recited by the members of the Order for the repose of the soul of him for whom it is intended.

ripeness of his virtues, seemed entitled to every attention and services. His personal appearance, his words, his countenance, his gait, all manifest his interior qualities. Though his body is weak, his intellect is still intact, and he enjoys the full use of his senses for prayer, meditation, and other spiritual exercises, the part of Mary, while old age undermining his constitution renders him less capable of fulfilling the duties of Martha."

At length Father Chauncy's health improved a little and he proceeded to Madrid, where he and his Procurator, Father Thomas Lawrence, were very kindly entertained by the Duchess of Feria. An interview with the King was sought and obtained. It proved successful, and Chauncy, having gained the object which had led him so far from his home, desired to return to Louvain without delay; he was, however, too weak to undertake the journey, and was prevailed upon to accept a kind invitation to spend the winter with the Duchess of Feria. In the spring, he set out, and managed to get as far as Paris, where he was taken ill for the last time. In the famous Chartreuse founded by St. Louis, King of France, surrounded by his French brethren, and fortified by the rites of Holy Church, Maurice Chauncy breathed out his pious soul to God, on the 12th of July, 1581. His body was laid in the church-yard of the monastery in which he died, and his soul, we may feel sure, was admitted without a long delay into the blessed company of the Martyrs of London, with whom he had lived so happily in his youth, and whose glorious history he wrote.

St. Gregory the Great.

(540—604.)

BY THE REV. A. J. SAXTON.

"None should take upon him to rule who first hath not learned to obey; nor command that obedience to his subjects, which before he hath not given to his own superiors." (St. Gregory's *Dialogues* I., i., old English translation.)

Early Years.

A STRANGE greeting is this, it would seem, which his people have prepared for the ears of their Pontiff Benedict I., as he proceeds through the streets of his still faithful Rome to one of its Basilicas. "Holy Father," they cry as they gather round him, "Holy Father, you have undone Rome; you have displeased St. Peter." Willing, as the first Pope had been (Acts xi. 3, 4.) to justify himself even before his subjects, "In what have I offended, my children?" he enquires. "Apostolic Father," the crowd repeat, "you have undone us, you have sent away Gregory from our city."

This representation of his people's distress fully determined their Bishop, already inclined to revoke an act which, against his inclination, he had been prevailed upon to do by the urgent and tearful entreaties of the holy monk himself. Thus while Gregory was making all haste to the seaboard, on his way, as he joyfully fancied, to convert the Saxons in Britain, the necessary Papal letter for his recall was being drawn up; eager hands were waiting to grasp it, and by the strong lines of its authority bind the runaway, for so they conceived him,

and lead him back to his own city and its sovereign call upon his charity and pastoral zeal.

He was already advanced three days on his journey when the unwelcome messengers overtook him. The fierce heat had driven him and his religious companions from the dusty, baking highway, to seek the cool freshness of a meadow, and the holy man was reading, when a presentiment came upon him that their further advance was about to be prevented. Still it was not too late. He rose at once, and expressed his wish to push forward without further delay. But even as the missioners were mounting, the Pope's messengers drew near, and Gregory read in their looks that his fears for his poor Angles were too true; he must give up his project, Benedict wrote, and return to Rome at once.

Let us join ourselves now to the homeward-bound party, and try to learn from his companions the history of the humble Gregory's early years, and the occasion of this attempted visit to our forefathers, whom the Bishops of Gaul had not thought fit to instruct. We shall be told that he comes of an ancient senatorial stock, inferior in rank to few of Rome's proudest, and ennobling its patrician blood before God by a rare virtue; that among his ancestors he counts a holy Pontiff, St. Felix III., and two saintly virgins, Tharsilla and Æmiliana, sisters to Gordianus, his late father, among his living relatives. We shall hear too of a story whispered among their friends, how the holy Monk St. Benedict, on his last visit to Rome, was entertained by Gordianus and his noble spouse, Silvia,—the days of whose widowhood are being spent in holy exercises of prayer and charity on the Aventine Hill,—and how he told the matron that her first-born son should rise to greatness among the foremost of God's servants—a forecast which, it is thought, Gregory is by no means likely to falsify. His steady application of powers much above the common, has gained him the repute of being second to none in the chief branches of the learning of his day, and his abandonment of inherited splendour, his retirement from high offices held in the city with ever-growing renown,

his foundation and ample endowment of six monasteries in Sicily, and the conversion of his own mansion on the Cœlian Hill into a seventh, some twelve months ago, in which he soon after made his religious profession,—all this gives fair promise of no ordinary holiness. Deploring as he does to his own intimate friends, the tardiness of his complete conversion to God, and accusing himself of former lukewarmness in trying to combine the perfect ways of contemplation with every outward appearance of a worldly life, it is not surprising that on his once granting his heart its best desires, he speedily overtook and soon outstripped many brethren of long standing and acknowledged proficiency in virtue, and quickly gained the reputation of being a very spiritual man, and one far advanced in the inner life. That he should so soon leave the place of his choice may at first sight give rise to no small marvel.

But not many weeks ago, we are told, while passing through the forum or market-place, he saw, among other things, some boys set for sale, their bodies white, their countenances beautiful, and their hair very fine. He asked from what country or nation they were brought, and was answered they were called Angles. "Right," said he, "Angles or Angels, for they have an angelic face, and it becomes such to be co-heirs with the Angels in heaven. . . And the men of their province *Deiri?* Truly are they *de ira* (from wrath) withdrawn from wrath and called to the mercy of Christ. How is the king of that province called?"—"Ælla"—"Alleluia," repeated he, "the praise of God the Creator must be sung in those parts." [Abridged from St. Bede's *Eccles. History of the Englisn Nation*, Book ii., Cap. i.; Dr. Giles' ed., vol. ii., p. 169.]

His Monastic Life and Diaconate. (575-579.)

Upon his return, St. Gregory, after throwing himself in humble submission at the Pope's feet, retired to his monastery on the Cœlian Hill. Little need be said of his life there. Frequent prayer and praise of God; contemplation of heavenly truths, study of the Sacred

Scriptures and of the writings of God's enlightened servants; labours in field and cell and writing-room by which succeeding generations have benefited, labours lightened by recreation spent in discussing the lives of God's heroes and the joys they inherit; a round of poverty, and penance and self-denial, which begets a peace beyond all understanding of worldlings:—such is every true monk's history. We must dwell awhile, however, upon one episode in that of Gregory. By untiring application, multiplied fasts, and lengthened vigils, he had taxed his vital powers beyond what many would style due prudence. A severe prostration and repeated illnesses resulted, "in which," he says, "a certain monk, Justus by name, who was well versed in the medical art, used to attend me." Fasting became no longer possible, or rather, to speak more truly, a rapid succession of fainting-fits made constant and generous support absolutely necessary. Men now-a-days look far less eagerly for indults and dispensations than Gregory longed to mortify his appetite. His inability to do so was more painful to him than its cause, for the most solemn fast of all Lent was drawing on, Holy Saturday, when, he reflected, all persons fast, even young boys. Among the brethren was one whose holy conversation he especially enjoyed, and whom all esteemed a saint, Eleutherius. He had given up the rule of St. Mark's monastery, near Spoleto, to live and die as a simple monk in St. Andrew's. Gregory now quietly stole with him into the chapel and commended his desires to the holy old man's prayers. Eleutherius, with tearful supplication, besought Almighty God for his afflicted brother, who thereupon regained his health so far as to perform his duties on Holy Saturday, fasting, and "on coming to eventide," he afterwards told one of his deacons, "I found myself so strong, that if I had wished I could have prolonged my fast for another day." (*Dialogues* III., 33.)

He was left in his dear solitude, which each day afforded fresh delights to one so eager in their pursuit, until some months after Pope Benedict's death, to

whom Pelagius II. succeeded in 577. This Pontiff compelled Gregory, by obedience, to take upon himself the sacred order of Deacon and the dignity of Cardinal, and employed him as secretary.

579-584. Gregory Papal Legate and Abbot.

The temporal necessities of the Holy See now opened out for our Saint a new field of usefulness. In the early part of the late pontificate, the Lombard hordes had swarmed down upon Italy from northern Germany. Pagans and idolaters some, others heretics, and the bitterer enemies, hence, of the truth—they soon, by an insatiable greed, a relentless cruelty, a brutish wastefulness of human life, and a satanic hatred of all that bore the name of sacred, proved themselves a scourge scarcely less severe than any of the ten persecutions. They were bidding fair to depopulate Italy, when in 579, Pelagius, unable any longer to bear the sight of his flock thus harrassed by savage and inhuman oppressors, resolved upon rousing the Emperor Tiberius to do something for the protection of the loveliest part of the empire. Gregory was chosen for the errand, and in the capacity of Papal Legate to the Emperor he set out for Constantinople attended by a chosen body of monks. During the journey as well as in the imperial city they led the life of mortification and holiness which they had practised in their monastery. Their mission, although received with due honour and respect, was denied the proper fulfilment of its object. God's design, indeed, in bringing St. Gregory would rather appear to have been the saving of a noble soul from the ravages of a false belief. The Patriarch at this time was St. Eutychius, who, for a warning to us of the need of self-distrust and watchfulness, as Father Ribadaneira observes, "although a holy man, did nevertheless after suffering banishment for the faith, working many miracles, and being eminent for much virtue, fall, by a singular dispensation of God's providence, into a grievous error. For he believed and taught that our bodies, al-

though raised to life, would not be palpable, nor clad with the bright robe of glory, nor endowed with the gifts of immortality and subtility." The zealous deacon allowed no false humility or human respect to deter him from opposing what he knew to be contrary to faith.

With a modesty more admirable even than his quick perception, acute discrimination, and ready reply, he drew from his rich store of scriptural knowledge such arguments as completely overthrew the mistaken views of the Archbishop. The latter's victory over himself was still more complete. For galling as it must have been to see his opponent scatter with a few plain and unanswerable distinctions all the force of his supporting texts, he yet, with the most charming humility, acquiesced in the Emperor's wish that those of his writings which were tainted should be publicly burnt. The sincerity of his recantation he proved soon after when in his last moments, and "when I myself," relates St. Gregory, "was sick of a most violent fever, and certain of my acquaintances went to give him greeting; as I have learnt from their narration, before their eyes he held up the skin of his own hand, saying 'I confess that we shall rise again in this flesh.' A thing which he himself avowed he had been used formerly to deny." [A.D. 582.] It may have been on occasion of this discussion that St. Gregory commenced his *Moral Exposition of the Book of Job*, a work that he approached with great diffidence, being almost appalled by its many difficulties, for it was ground hitherto unworked. It was only indeed after much prayer that he continued it, being urged and encouraged thereto by the brethren, and by St. Leander, Bishop of Seville, who at this time represented the affairs of Spain at the imperial court. As Gregory's letters testify, these two conceived for each other a lifelong regard and friendship, based upon the holiest motives.

Tiberius died in August, 582, four months after his Bishop, without having been able to send any succour to the Pope. He was replaced by Maurice, his son-in-law, who showed the same sincere regard for Gregory and begged him to stand sponsor for his infant son.

Maurice, however willing, could do little or nothing to relieve the Pope, who at last recalled Gregory; and before many months had passed over our Saint's head, he again found himself within the much-desired shelter of his monastery. The brethren, among them being perhaps our own St. Augustine, would welcome him with a joy proportioned to their love, a love which had prompted a number of them, along with Maximianus the Abbot, to undertake a toilsome journey and actually risk their lives, merely to satisfy its cravings by visiting him while he was at Constantinople. With what a holy enthusiasm too they would help to unpack his treasures, which comprised most precious relics, namely, the head of St. Luke, and an arm of their own venerated Patron, St. Andrew.

Soon their desires were gratified by his acceptance of the dignity of Abbot. He exacted the strict observance of their rule with the utmost severity; and allowed no thoughts of personal favour to influence his government, as appears from the following incident. The monk Justus, his former medical attendant, had himself fallen sick, and the brethren were scandalized to learn of his having kept back for his own use three gold pieces, thus breaking the time-honoured rule, that all property should be in common. The Abbot, after considering the case well, forbade the others to assemble in prayer around the death-bed, and Justus, grieved to the heart at being left to fight his last battle unsupported, was told the reason of their absence. And although he died with every mark of sorrow, Gregory's original order was fulfilled to the letter, that the body should be cast into a foul ditch, and along with it the coins, while the monks all cried out, "Keep thy money to perish with thee." (Acts viii. 20.) A month afterwards, the Saint ordered thirty daily Masses to be offered for the departed religious, and after the last one, Justus appeared to his brother Copiosus, who was a physician well known in the city, and declared that his soul had passed from a state of suffering and purgation to the abode of the blessed.

Besides the government of his monastery, St. Gregory had still his duties to discharge in the city as Deacon, and those also of Papal Secretary. Pelagius was bent upon healing the schism of the Bishops of Istria, who refused to condemn the *Three Chapters*,* and he made use of Gregory's talents for that end. He first wrote assuring them of Rome's perfect accord with the first four Councils, and dilating on the evils of schism, but abstained from any discussion of the vexed question. A second letter followed, which received, like the first, a contumacious answer. The third assumed the proportions of a dogmatic treatise, calculated to convince any except the incurably obstinate, such as Elias and his suffragans appear to have been.

590. Gregory elected Pope.

The closing months of the year 589 were marked by continued and heavy rain, which so swelled the Tiber that it rose to an unusual height in the streets of Rome. But the damage done by the mere inundation was small in comparison with the evil results that followed. For the floods bore down the usual load of carcasses and of corrupt matter, and venomous serpents, alive and dead. Much of this filth lodged in the city, where it soon bred or perhaps rather fed a violent plague. Pope Pelagius was among the earliest victims, dying on Feb. 8th, 590.

His bereaved flock turned quite naturally to the one man who for a score of years, in spite of his humility and love of seclusion, had been foremost in their thoughts and closest to their hearts. Gregory was elected with one consent to be Bishop of Rome. Over many an election before, the Roman Emperors had claimed to exercise control, by approving of the Bishop when chosen, and to this, though without acknowledging it as a right, the Popes submitted from motives of prudence. Our humble Saint now eagerly availed himself of the custom, as of a loophole through which his retiring spirit might creep back again into obscurity. He wrote off at once

* See p. 16.

to Maurice, entreating him to withhold his approval, and warmly appealing to his friendly feelings for relief from a burden far too weighty for his shoulders.

Meanwhile his deeply-rooted charity prompted him to comply with the wish of all concerned, and assume the full direction of affairs. In his eyes the pestilence was a clear manifestation of God's wrath—vast numbers he asserts were seen to fall before heaven-sent darts—and his first care was to exhort the people in repentance, in a sermon preserved for us by St. Gregory of Tours, whose deacon was an eyewitness of these dire events.

Stirred up by his words, the poor panic-stricken people forgot their aimless and powerless terror for the while, in the pursuit of a united purpose, and assembled in seven bands to implore God's mercy through the intercession of His saints, by singing their litanies. Gregory arranged and directed all, acting it may be as precenter, for which his musical taste well qualified him.

He led them in procession to their final station at St. Peter's, bearing aloft that picture of our Blessed Lady which some assert to have been painted by St. Luke. And although the pestilence was so severe as to carry off within an hour eighty of those gathered together, St. Gregory, undismayed and unwearied, persevered in storming Heaven with acts of penance and devotion. At last, according to the story as told at Jervaux Abbey in the 14th century, he was permitted like David (1 Paralip. xxi., 16), to see the destroying Angel, who stayed his hand and sheathed his sword over the Mole of Hadrian, where now stands the Castle of St. Angelo.

The Pope-elect, when the plague had abated, found time to think about his own affairs. As he had relied upon the effect of his letter to Maurice, he so far fancied that his solitude was secure. With all the greater shock must the news have come upon him, that an imperial letter had arrived, expressive of the fullest approval and the most sincere delight at Gregory's election. He had still one resource, to imitate his patron St. Gregory Nazianzen. And when the clergy and people of Rome, triumphing in the success of their watchfulness—for the

letter in which he had trusted had been stopped, and another forwarded instead, of a vastly different tenor, by the prefect Germanus whom some believe to have been the Saint's brother,—when his joyous flock presented themselves at St. Andrew's to conduct their Pontiff to his Basilica, their hearts sank low indeed at finding that he had escaped from the city.

Messengers were at once despatched to search for him, while by fasting and prayer his flock besought Heaven for his restoration to them. Of the Saint's own reflections during the three days that he lay hid, we have most probably a very faithful reproduction in the first part of the book, *Of the Pastoral Charge*, in which, like St. Chrysostom in his Six Books of the Priesthood, he gives the reasons for his flight.

His devoted pursuers were at length led to his hiding-place by a light, not of earth, that gleamed over it. He could not fail to see in these beams from above a counterpart of the light of consolation and of confidence in God which now flooded his soul, in spite of the tears that were still upon his cheeks; and in her inmost depths, his soul caught the whisper of her delightful Guest: "I have found David my servant; with my holy oil I have anointed him. For my hand shall help him, and my arm shall strengthen him. The enemy shall have no advantage over him; nor the son of iniquity have power to hurt him." (Ps. 88, 21.)

Strong in this trust of divine grace, he turned to those who stood respectfully awaiting him. "Unworthy as I am to take upon myself the burdens of a bishopric, I yield to the bidding of Almighty God and of your will, who more in the abundance of your affection than in the esteem of your judgment, have wished to have me set over you." (Ep. 32, bk. i.)

In their company, which would soon be augmented, when the good news spread, by joyful bands of the Roman people, the new Pontiff entered the city to take upon himself the sublime charge committed first to St. Peter, the highest dignity on earth, that of ruling the whole flock of Christ, sheep and lambs, bishops who

lead and faithful who follow. When the needful preparations had been made, he received Episcopal consecration, and mounted the throne of Peter on September 3rd, 590, being in his 49th or 50th year.

His appreciation of the Papal dignity.

That he had been sincere in fleeing from such high honours, is proved by his first letters, written not to strangers, but to familiar and cherished friends, men who had long shared the secrets of his bosom, and whom he would scarce attempt to deceive by an artificial regret and a threadbare imposture. His was the only heart that had failed to rejoice at the appointment, and in terms most distressing to his humility, congratulations had been poured in upon him by nobles, princes, and bishops. We can fancy them reading his answers from parchments blurred with his tear-drops, teeming as they do with regret for his happy life in the cloister, and awe at the boundless extent of his cares and obligations. His dignity he describes as a binding chain; its duties are a burden that press him down to the earth; his elevation is ruin itself, for his pinnacle of contemplation from which he used to gaze upon heavenly joys, has crumbled away. He who for the very purpose of avoiding worldly distractions first sought the harbour of the monastery now complains: "I am a slave to earthly cares, to the like of which I never remember myself subjected during my life as a layman."

An abiding sorrow had indeed fallen upon him, that betrayed itself at times in his looks, and was never removed. In all this he had one consolation, that he was submitting to the yoke of the Lord; he placed great trust in his friends' prayers, which he continually implored and conjured them to pour out for him.

And what were his theological views of his position? For there is a theory that St. Gregory refused the title and authority of Supreme Pontiff, styling himself rather "servant of the servants of God." "The Patriarch of Constantinople, John the Faster," says, for instance, a

prominent writer,* "called himself the Œcumenical or General Patriarch, meaning that he was Bishop of all other Bishops; but Gregory refused to acknowledge this title in any one else, or to have it given to himself."

Hence it seems well, at the very outset, to group together various passages from his writings, to show what really he held concerning this divine institution.

1. He founds the claim of the See of Rome to be regarded as supreme over all other sees, and as custodian of the true faith for all the world, upon the same basis as did his predecessors, namely, the fact that it was the See of St. Peter "who held the princedom of holy Church by authority of God." † In the second letter, written in the name of Pope Pelagius to the Bishops of Istria, he quotes with approval the words of St. Cyprian, the illustrious martyr, in the book which he styled *Of the Name of Unity:* "The commencement takes its rise from unity, and the primacy is given to Peter, that Christ's Church and Chair may be shown to be one;" and again, "He that holdeth not the unity of the Church, doth he believe himself to hold the faith? He that abandoneth and resisteth the chair of Peter, upon which the Church is founded, doth he trust to be in the Church?"

In the first letter Gregory had written, after quoting St. Luke xxii. 31–32: "Consider, dearly beloved, the Truth could not lie; and that the faith of Peter will never be able to be shaken or changed; for though the devil asked to have all the disciples to sift, for Peter alone does the Lord declare that He has prayed, and He wished that by him the others should be confirmed." ‡ And some nine years later, when writing to the Emperor,§ he lays down the same text, side by side with St. John xxi. 17, and St. Matt. xvi. 8, as the ground of the assertion: "It is clear to all who know the Gospel, that by

* Eighteen Centuries of Beginnings of Church History: by Charlotte Mary Yonge, p. 136.

† Of the Pastoral Care, Part II., c. 6. ‡ Baronius, Ann. 586.

§ Ep. 20, bk. v. in the new order published by the Benedictine Fathers at Paris in 1705: the edition henceforward quoted.

the Lord's voice the charge of the whole Church was entrusted to Peter, the holy and chief Apostle of all the Apostles." St. Peter is indeed, in Gregory's eyes, the perpetual holder, possessor, and master of the diocese of Rome: "We who though unworthy have received the government of the Apostolic See in the place of Peter Prince of the Apostles;" he is ever identified with the reigning Pontiff, and their common cause is that too of God Himself and of the whole Church, which along with Gospel and Canon, is attacked by the assumption of the title Universal Bishop.* "Although Gregory's sins be so great that he ought to suffer such things, there are no sins of St. Peter the Apostle to merit for him these sufferings." † "The Lord Venantius came to blessed Peter the Apostle to ask urgently of me." ‡

2. St. Gregory asserted in words and maintained by act the Primacy of the Roman Bishop.

"The Apostolic See," he wrote in 592, "by appointment of God, stands set over other churches." And elsewhere, "if any fault be found in Bishops, I know not what Bishop is not subject to this See."§

To omit mention of numberless exercises of authority within his own Patriarchate, or as Metropolitan of the Roman Province, to John of Constantinople he administered a most severe rebuke for delaying to answer certain questions regarding a priest and some monks treated with undue rigour, and for professing in the end an utter ignorance of the case.‖

In the next year, being appealed to by the priest Adeodatus, who complained of unjust removal from his church during a two months' sick leave, the Pope ordered Clementius, Primate of Byzacene in Africa, to make careful and strict enquiry into the case; ¶ the intruded priest, if found guilty of simony, was to be debarred all further exercise of his sacred functions.

* Ep. 48, bk. ii., A.D. 591. † Ep. 20, 21, bk. v.

‡ Ep. 53, bk. ii.; and frequently in all his letters. A similar usage of speech obtained in England in Saxon times; See A. S. Chronicle, pp. 26, 27, 38, &c., vol. ii.

§ Ep. 30, bk. iii.; and Ep. 59, bk. ix. ‖ Ep. 53, bk. iii.

¶ Ep. 13, iv.

Gregory suspended also an intruded Archbishop of Spalatro and his consecrators from their sacred office, under penalty of excommunication, "anathema from God and from blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles." *

In one of the very letters indeed in which he condemns as "a proud and pestiferous epithet, a new, rash and superstitious name," the designation of a bishop as 'Universal,' he reminds the bishops of the East how Pelagius II. had nullified the acts of the Synod where it had been assumed, and declares, "if anyone shall spurn these presents in any part, let him know himself cut off from the peace of blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles."†

3. Finally, he accepts without demur, acknowledgments of supremacy, which recognise in Rome "the first Apostolic See, that most holy see which transmits its rights to the Universal Church;" ‡ and allows himself to be called "Holy Father of Fathers," § but as constantly rejects the title Universal Bishop, after the example of his predecessors, to whom in honour of blessed Peter Prince of the Apostles, it was offered during the venerable Council of Chalcedon, and afterwards by succeeding bishops.

Whatever in short John of Constantinople meant by "Universal Bishop," which in 588 had brought down upon his synod a prompt exercise of Rome's universal jurisdiction—the nullifying of its acts by Pelagius in a papal letter couched in the severest terms of reproval—Pope Gregory understood it to signify not "Bishop of all others Bishops," but "Bishop *exclusive* of all other Bishops, solitary, single Bishop," not "supreme, chief Bishop." "If one, as he argues, be universal, then it remains that you are not Bishops," he wrote to the Bishops of the East; and to the Empress, "He strives to be called the only Bishop, scheming to reduce beneath him all things that appertain to the one sole head,

* Epp. 20-47, bk. iv. 25-27, bk. vi. A.D. 594-596.
† Ep. 68, bk. ix. ‡ Ep. 57, bk. iii.
§ Epp. 16 and 17, bk. xiv.; Compare this with the words of St. Cyril of Alexandria at the Council of Ephesus in 431: "the most holy Celestine, Archbishop of the whole world, and father and Patriarch of the great city Rome."—Ep. 30, bk. v: and 30, bk. viii.

namely, Christ."* And it was in this sense that he repudiated it, and declared he would do so even at the cost of his life.

590-594. First years of his Rule.

The first view of government, as presented to Gregory's eyes, was one well calculated to daunt even an intrepid ambition and to quell a restless activity: nothing, truly, short of heroic courage, instilled and upheld by divine grace, could have stood before it. The Eternal City, to begin with, must have worn the aspect of a desert, depopulated as it was by the plague, which still exacted tribute from the thin ranks of the citizens. An earthquake and a violent storm heaped ruin upon desolation, throwing down the walls, and wrecking churches and public buildings. Then close after sickness and disaster came starvation, and when the poor people, with whom Gregory's charity was already a proverb, resorted to him in their extreme need, he was utterly distressed to learn that last winter's floods had undermined the papal granaries and swept away some thousands of bushels of corn. It wanted but an ever-threatened incursion of the barbarous Lombards to fill up the measure of misery. The slight check put upon these marauders a few months before, had been quite inadequate, and their encroachments caused an almost hourly anxiety. But they refrained from invading the capital, a blessing which its Prelate ascribed to the protection of the holy Apostles SS. Peter and Paul.

In the "new Rome," Constantinople, its Patriarch was scandalizing the Church and endangering her unity, by his imitation of the lost Archangel, who spurning the legions of Angels associated with him as companions, strove to start up to a height of singularity that he might appear subject to none and alone supreme over all; who said, "I will ascend above the height of the clouds; I will be like the Most High." (Is. xiv. Ep. 18, bk. v.)

Spain had not ceased groaning from the ravages of the Arian Visigoths, under the impious and ruthless

* Epp. 21, 18 and 43, bk. v.

king Leovigild, who martyred his convert-son St. Hermenigild, and had not many months been removed by death. The same heresy in Africa was still arming the cruel Vandals against Bishops and people alike, and in this province also the Donatists were snatching and scattering the flock of Christ. Here again, as in Gaul, and in parts of Italy itself, the wounds inflicted on Christ's Mystical Body, by the lamentable misunderstanding of the *Three Chapters*, were yet raw and bleeding.

Poor distant Britain too! Her comely Angles, untaught even still, for no other heart had gone out to them as his own had done fifteen years before, worshipped their stocks and stones with unseemly sacrifice.

Turn which way he would to remedy these and countless other ills, Gregory was beset by some lesser care to engage his attention. "In this place, forsooth," he lamented to his friend St. Leander, "I am buffeted by such waves of this world, that I can in no wise bring to port the aged and decaying bark which by secret ordering of God, I have got to pilot. Now the waves pour in at the prow, now the seas swell up in mountains of foam at the side, now the tempest drives on at the stern." But his zeal animated him against all trials and opposition; the higher the billows and the fiercer the winds that arose, the more fervent became his suit at the Throne of Grace, the stronger and more deeply-rooted grew his confidence in God.

Within four months of his accession, a Synod was convened at Rome, to stem the most violent of these evils, the schism of the *Three Chapters*. St. Gregory had all along, with the clearest insight, urged the distinction between belief condemned and persons approved.

The Three Chapters—certain writings in which Theodore and Theodoret, Bishops of Mopsuesta and of Cyrrus, and Ibas writing to one Maris,—were condemned after a long and careful examination by a council which met for that purpose at Constantinople in 553, and which was fully confirmed and approved by Pope Vigilius. Having small knowledge of the Acts of this, the fifth Ecumenical Council, and influenced perhaps by false representations

of it, many in the West persistently refused to give adhesion to its decrees, as having opposed previous Councils, and mainly that of Chalcedon. The truth was that Theodoret and Ibas,—Theodore being already dead,—had been compelled at Chalcedon to give a verbal profession of orthodoxy, and had been reconciled. Their writings, in the press of more urgent matters had remained unconsidered. Hence, Pope Vigilius and the Fathers at Constantinople,—who constantly professed the utmost reverence for previous Councils, and absolute agreement with them,—had but performed what was left undone, not attempted to alter anything done.

Severus of Acquileia, leader of the schism in north-eastern Italy, was now bidden to meet his colleagues in Rome, but disobeyed. The troubled state of the land was reason more than enough to prevent his being coerced, and for a time no greater success appeared likely to attend St. Gregory's efforts than was achieved by his no less zealous predecessor.

The Synod however brought out the Pontiff's eagerness for home-reform. Among other things he ruled that henceforth no layman should be employed in attendance upon the Pope's person. And at this time he ordered the destruction of many figures of demons, and of diabolical carvings that had been allowed to disgrace the city and suburbs.

His letters, moreover, give abundant proof that his pastoral zeal was in no whit lessened by rebuffs. Among them stands out the synodal letter to the other Patriarchs, containing a most valuable disquisition on the eminence and sanctity of the care of souls, a reproduction in fact to some extent, of the Book of the Pastoral Charge. In conclusion he writes:—"As the four books of the Holy Gospel, so, I avow, do I receive and reverence the four Councils. The fifth Council also, I likewise reverence. . . Whoever thinks other than they, let him be anathema." (Ep. 25, bk. i.)

The holy Father's efforts in every department, tempered as they were only by such recreation as was afforded by relating and discussing his many legends of holy

persons, and by composition of his book on Job, brought on a renewed attack of his early disorder, and he was compelled to take some weeks' rest, during which he wrote his *Dialogues*. The miracles with which it abounds have brought upon it the scoffs of modern sceptics; the style, as its author intended, is conversational, and on that account below the level of his other works; but it met with an almost universal welcome, and has reappeared in various languages.

Apostle of England.*

For some four years the Pope was apparently unable to give attention to the Angles. A rumour had reached him that they had expressed a desire to be converted to the Christian faith,† and he had directed his agent in Gaul, Candidus, "to purchase English slave-boys of the age of seventeen or eighteen years, that having been consecrated to God in the monasteries they may make spiritual progress. . . ."

A few months afterwards, St. Augustine and his band of forty monks had started on their journey through Gaul for Britain. They bore with them letters to Theoderic and Theodebert, and Brunehild, the Sovereigns of the Franks, in which St. Gregory, while rebuking the remissness of the Bishops of Gaul, desires them to further the advance of the missioners to the best of their power, commending St. Augustine's zeal and energy in very high terms. In a similar strain he wrote to the bishops through whose sees they would have to pass.

Sorely disappointed must the zealous Pontiff have been, when Augustine returned after a comparatively short absence, with the tidings that his little band was much discouraged by the rumours poured into their ears of the ferocity of their intended neophytes, and sadly dispirited by assertions that their task was a hopeless one. But they had chosen a very lukewarm advocate of their views, and Augustine soon rejoined them, having been promoted from the dignity of prior to that of abbot.

* See C.T.S. Life of St. Augustine, price 1d. † Ep. 58, bk. vi.

His superior had furnished him with a letter, urging the monks to "carry out to the full the good work that by the Lord's help you have begun . . . . . May Almighty God protect you by His grace, and grant to me to see the fruit of your labour in our eternal country. So that, although I may not labour along with you, I may be found along with you in the joy of your reward, for I wish, in sooth, so to labour. May God keep you safe, dearest sons."

Preacher and Doctor of the Church.

St. Gregory was mindful of the Apostle's lesson that one of a Bishop's first duties is to preach the gospel, and has left behind him a large collection of homilies, upon the Gospels and upon Ezechiel. In the Benedictine Annals we read how one afflicted with an almost incurable spiritual dryness met with this holy Pope's sermons, and read and read with ever-increasing gladness of soul, until the gloom of despair gave place to fervour of devotion and delight of heavenly things.

The congregations which always crowded the basilicas when he was to preach, could scarcely fail to derive less profit from his spoken word, especially when at times they saw their beloved Father preaching, in spite of such weakness, that his voice could barely reach them all, or even compelled to forego the precious task, and sit while others read what he had already carefully composed.

The Saint's sermons are short, particularly those on days of lengthened ceremony or arduous fast. Hence they admit of no very lofty flights of rhetoric, but have the ring of that genuine eloquence, speaking from the heart's sincere conviction. Depth of thought is expressed in clear and simple language, and a long and earnest pondering of the Sacred Text has enabled the preacher to make every word of it almost convey some lesson.

If the beloved disciple's sermon was ever, "Love one another," that of St. Gregory, like the other John's, was "Do penance, for the kingdom of God is at hand."

(St. Matt. iii. 2.) He would turn to account recent events, and by them direct the thoughts of his flock to the life to come: and at times digressed awhile to lash some prevailing folly, as excessive show in dress. With St. Augustine, he knew the value of a strongly-marked contrast like the following: "Two hearts below,—of Dives and Lazarus,—one Watcher above, Who by trial was exercising this one for glory, and by forbearance awaiting that other for punishment."

But one grand feature of these discourses is the apt use of that endless store of examples collected in the monastery. For people and priest alike, as the Saint would observe, are aided in blameless and upright advance along the narrow path by fixing their gaze upon God's servants. And he commonly set up for honour and imitation not saints of far-off lands, but heroes connected with their own soil and clime,—a pattern that might be more profitably copied in our land, rich as it is with saints of every rank and degree. Treating for instance of humility, he adduced St. Peter, "first on the summit of the Apostolate and first in humility. For consider, dearest brethren, upon what loftiness of mind he stood, who praised St. Paul's epistles, in which he found it written that he was himself deserving of blame.* What must have been his meekness, what his quiet of soul, his solidity of mind, and calm control of thought. See him chidden by his inferior, and he disdains not to be chidden: all the gifts he had received he banished as it were from memory, that he might stoutly hold fast the one gift, humility." †

"But then does the seed of the word readily bud forth, when it is watered in the hearer's breast by the preacher's piety," is St. Gregory's own remark. ‡ And so, when a certain Abbot John had journeyed from Persia to venerate the sacred bodies of SS. Peter and Paul, and meeting in Rome's street, Peter's worthy successor and imitator, knelt before him, the Pope not

* Gal. ii., 11 and 14. † On Ezech. hom. 6, bk. ii., no. 9.

‡ *Pastoral Charge*, pt. ii., ch. vii.

only tried to prevent him,* but actually bent his own knee until the other rose. He could well preach compassion for the poor, whose charities were bounded only by the extent of an almost princely patrimony. And when his researches brought to light any whose lot had not always been poverty, he took care to send them such food as they had been used to enjoy in better days. Nor was his generosity that which prides itself upon heading a subscription list, and then burns the glove which a beggar has presumed to touch in taking the daintily-given dole. He waited in person on the poor fed at his expense at St. Andrew's, calling the old men by the honoured name of "Father," and none were so welcome as they who could chat with him on the saints they had known. Once he deprived himself for days of the consolation of saying Mass, because he laid it to the charge of his neglect that a poor man was found starved to death in the street.

It is observed that "none of the Fathers has written better on humility; he is truly to be styled 'the Doctor of humility,' as Augustine 'the Doctor of Grace.' Let us hear him on Image-worship and Relics. "We send you a little blessed cross of Peter the Apostle, with the benefit of part of his chains inserted . . . may they free your neck from the yoke of sin. Around it is part of blessed Laurence's gridiron on which he was burnt, . . . that it may inflame your mind with love of the Lord." † Like St. Paul, he was constantly invoking the prayers of the holy while living, and asks: "because in heaven they all see God in one common glory, what is there that they do not know, when they know Him who knoweth all things?" ‡

"That you have had zeal against the adoration of anything made with hands, we have praised. § But it is one thing to adore a painting, another by story of a painting to learn what is to be adored. For what writing does for those who read, this painting does for the ignorant. . . . And not without reason has

* Cp., *Acts* x., 26.

† Ep. 33, bk. iii.

‡ Dial., iv., 33.

§ Epp. 105, ix., 13, xi.

antiquity allowed the stories of the Saints to be told by paintings in the sacred places."

Speaking elsewhere of the Holy Mass, "this Sacrifice," he says, "doth especially save our souls from everlasting damnation, . . . there His Body is received, there His Flesh is distributed for the salvation of the people. . . . what right-believing Christian can doubt, that in the very hour of the Sacrifice at the words of the priest, the heavens be opened, and the choirs of Angels are present in that mystery of Jesus Christ; that high things are accompanied with low, and earthly joined to heavenly; and that one thing is made of visible and invisible."*

The holy Bishop once noticed a smile upon a certain matron's face as he was about to give her the Sacred Host, and drawing back his hand, replaced It on the Altar. Mass finished, he demanded a public explanation of such irreverence, and at last wrung from her the admission, "Because you offered as the Lord's Body, the bread which I knew my own hands had made." By his prayers Gregory obtained the removal of the species of bread, and pointing to the Sacred Flesh and Blood miraculously unveiled, "Learn," said he, "to believe the Truth Himself, even now declaring 'The bread which I give is My flesh; and My Blood is drink indeed.' . . . By that power in which He made all things out of nothing, and by working of the Holy Ghost built up for Himself a body out of the flesh of the ever Virgin; for our reparation, by operation of the Holy Ghost, He changes bread and wine mingled with water,—their own species still enduring,—into His Flesh and Blood at the Catholic prayer."

604. His Death.

We find St. Gregory complaining that "what the mind has not willingly undertaken, it does not fittingly manage." But his untiring perseverance overcame in the end. Schism and heresy, if not stamped out, were

* Dialogues, bk. iv., cap. 58; *Quarterly Series*, Burns & Oates.

trampled into silence. Simony in his later years arose, but was not more victorious. The Lombards, by the efforts of Queen Theodolinda, under St. Gregory's advice, made peace and were converted in great numbers.

St. Gregory's thankfulness for St. Augustine's success in Britain is evinced, not merely in his letters, but in his books as well. Many times in the former we hear the echo of the song of joy with which he greeted the new Archbishop. "Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will, for that the Grain of Wheat falling into the ground has died, that It might not reign alone in Heaven, by Whose death we live, by Whose weakness we are made strong, by Whose suffering we are snatched from suffering, by Whose love we seek in Britain the brethren whom we knew not, and by Whose gift we find them, whom yet unknown to us we sought. For who could avail to tell what great joy has arisen here in the heart of all the faithful at tidings that the English nation, by the operation of God Almighty's grace, and the labours of your brotherhood, the darkness of error driven out, has been bathed in the light of holy faith; that with most upright mind it now tramples on the idols to which formerly in vain fear it prostrated." * And in the Moral Exposition of the Book of Job, we find inserted a reference to this success.

The original band of labourers had soon proved too small, and additional ones had been despatched to Britain, with many wise directions worthy of St. Gregory for the rule of that already flourishing corner of the vineyard. It is noteworthy that in his last extant letter to St. Augustine, written in June, 601, the Pontiff virtually asserts his jurisdiction over all the Bishops in the island, whether British or consecrated by St. Augustine himself.

As the years went on our Saint's industry never flagged, in spite of the gout which for many months at a time so afflicted him that he could scarcely leave his couch for a couple of hours to say Mass. He would still dictate;

* Ep. 28, bk. xi.

and would have himself carried to one of the two schools where his improved style of chant was taught, and would beat time for the boys as he lay.

At last, on the 12th of March, 604, came the summons, long desired and long prayed for. "The Lord comes," he had once said to his flock, "when He hastens to judgment. He knocks when by the troubles of sickness He shows death to be near. . . . He that is secure in his hope and in his work, opens at once to the knock, because he awaits the Judge with gladness. And when the time of immediate death approaches, he grows cheerful at thought of the glory of reward."

* * * * * * *

"Your forefathers sought His favour, so do you also seek it for yourselves, and take pains to keep it: let His honour be in no way lessened among you, who even now can be your helper in all things." *

The Saint himself now yearns to be our helper: from his throne he calls out to the sons of his dear Angles—"I exhort you that while the time of life remain, your souls be not found severed from the Church of Blessed Peter, to whom are entrusted the keys of the heavenly kingdom, and the power of binding and loosing is made over; lest if here you despise this his benefit hereafter he shut against you the entrance of life." † Will they still neglect his words?

* Ep. 21, bk. v. † Ep. 43, bk. iv.

Father Hermann.

(1820-1871.)

BY MRS. LIEBICH.

HERMANN COHEN was born of Jewish parents at Hamburg, in Germany, November 10, 1820. His father was a rich merchant, and held a high position in his native city, by reason of his wealth and his strict integrity in matters of business. The Jewish cult in Hamburg had undergone certain modern innovations, and beneath the hands of the so-called reformers many of its ancient rites had entirely disappeared.

As a child, Hermann went with his parents to the new synagogue, but instinctively took the keenest interest in any of the older ceremonies which still remained. "When," he writes, "I saw the Chief Rabbi ascend the steps of the sanctuary, draw aside a curtain and open a door, I experienced a wonderful feeling of expectation and hope." In vain did he try to penetrate and realize the meaning of the symbolic mysteries enacted before his eyes; his childish doubts remained unsolved—his investigations unanswered. This relish for religious ceremonies, these mysterious aspirations of his little soul, were but foretastes of the treasures of Divine grace in store for him.

Hermann was known as a "wonder child" in Germany. He made such rapid progress with his Latin and Greek studies that, at nine years of age, he found himself competing at school in a class composed of boys of fourteen and upwards. His extraordinary aptitude for music showed itself even earlier. At the age of six he could play the airs of all the operas then in vogue, and his talent for improvisation was remarkable. His first music-teacher was one of those men who justify their vagaries and excesses by sheltering themselves behind the title of genius. The precocious child, dazzled by the fantastic extravagances of his master, indulged in wild dreams of what his own future would be; and the glamour of a successful artistic career glittered before his eyes.

The following anecdote shows the latent energy and strength in Hermann's character, both of which were destined to be put to such exalted uses. His teacher had composed an excessively difficult piece of music, and had played it with great success at a public concert in Hamburg. Jealous of his master's triumph, the boy secretly secured the composition, and resolutely set himself to conquer its difficulties. When sufficiently satisfied of his own progress, he asked the professor to allow him to study the piece. Exasperated by what he considered undue presumption on the part of his pupil, the offended musician responded by boxing Hermann's ears. Whereupon the child tearfully rejoined: "At least let me try; and then you can judge better if it is altogether beyond my capacity." The presence of the boy's mother gained for him a somewhat unwilling assent. He then played the difficult composition with such ease and facility that the astonished and delighted master immediately took him the round of his friends, exhibiting him with pride as his little musical prodigy.

This episode helped to decide Hermann's future career. His mother consented to his ardent desire of adopting music as a profession and his father offered no opposition. The Cohens had just at that time experienced some heavy financial losses. The prospect

of their son becoming a great musician was therefore looked upon with no small amount of favour. In his "Confessions," written in after life at the command of his superiors, Father Hermann describes his boyish anticipation of a brilliant future.

"Successes, honours, renown, the pleasures of an artist's life, travels, adventures—all these rose up resplendent before my excited and precocious imagination. I longed to be of an age to realize all my dreams." His first religious impressions had become entirely obliterated. At his father's house he was surrounded by those to whom the love of Mammon was of paramount interest. "Our house," he writes, "was like unto an ant-hill—people constantly coming and going, talking incessantly of shares and stocks, or greedily counting money. The only marked distinction between them consisted in superlative degrees of wealth and fortune. Honours were meted out according to riches."

Hermann made his musical début in Altona. This concert was followed by a series of successes in the principal towns of Germany. Finally, Paris, the goal of his ambition, was reached. Little did he then foresee what was in store for him in that city, nor did he anticipate the real happiness he was to find there. His mother hastened to procure an introduction to the great pianist and composer Franz Liszt. Hermann played to him, and the great maestro showed his admiration for the clever child-artist by adopting him at once as his most privileged and favourite pupil. Into whatever society Liszt had the entrée, Hermann was to be found at his side. The gifted boy played to the great ladies of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, and they spoilt and caressed him and vied with each other in loading him with tokens of their adulation. Invitations poured in on all sides, and dinner-parties and soirées were given in honour of the boy pianist.

Hermann's renown soon crossed the threshold of Paris drawing-rooms. The newspapers published his triumphs; sculptors and painters disputed for the honour of taking his portrait. His appearance was

singularly pleasing. His long hair fell negligently over his shoulders; his eyes were bright and full of keen intelligence,—his expression candid and amiable. The nickname of "Puzzi" given him by Liszt and George Sand, fitted him exactly. In English this word has no equivalent: derived from the German *Puzzig* it translates well into the dainty French name of *Mignon.*

As he grew to manhood, young Hermann experienced, amid all his gaieties and successes, an indescribable sadness. Vainly did he try to appease the longings of his soul by tasting new joys and pleasures. The feeling of satiety only gained renewed strength with each attempt to satisfy it. At the age of sixteen he left his mother's roof and thus becoming his own master gave himself up with freer and greater zest to vagaries of all kinds. "My music lessons," he writes, "procured me money, and money procured me pleasures. I gave the rein to all my whims and caprices. Was I happy? No, my God! The thirst that consumed me could not be quenched." He proceeds to describe the artists whose society he frequented; the nights spent in gambling; the unrefreshing sleep that followed. Little by little the delicate, highly-strung nature of the cultured artist shrank from his coarse and unrefined companions. He began to feel a distaste for the wild life they led. At last he found himself alone with his silent and deserted piano. "I experienced the void and solitariness which is so often felt by those who lead a desultory life. It penetrates into the haunts of pleasure seekers; sooner or later it gains the mastery over nearly every heart." Later on, writing in the solitude of his beloved Carmel, he recalled the emptiness and desolation of his soul amid the joys of the world: "Now again I am solitary, but how different it seems! My solitude is shared with Thee, O Jesus! Thou art with me all the days of my life . . . . Heretofore a frightful loneliness saddened and oppressed me. I sought distraction in evil books and in the society of those like myself. . . . But now, would I were always alone with Thee, O my God! How delicious is this solitude shared with Thee!

*In Carmel God and I!** How true it is!—Alone with God—and the days fly by on wings of happiness."

The remembrance of his mother, lonely and deserted, rose forcibly before Hermann's mind, and he resolved to return to her. She received him with love and solicitude as a prodigal son. But ere long his restless spirit re-asserted itself, and he persuaded his over-indulgent parent to accompany him on his travels. In 1846, after nine years spent in roving from one country to another, Hermann again settled down alone in Paris. He took up the threads of his old life and occupied himself with teaching, playing in public, and gambling. A passion for cards had taken possession of him, to the exclusion of all his former pleasures. He now vainly searched for happiness in the excitement produced by the gaming tables. And all the time God was slowly and surely weaning him from an unholy life, by inspiring him with disgust for all its puerile joys. Like another St. Paul, he was soon to find himself arrested by Divine grace on the world's broad highway. The hour was very near.

One Friday in May, 1847, Prince de la Moskowa, who was in the habit of conducting a choir of amateurs at the Church of St. Valère, in the Rue de Bourgoyne, came to Hermann and asked him if he would kindly act as his substitute that afternoon, as he was unable to fulfil his usual office.

Pleased to be of service to his friend, Hermann presented himself in the choir at the prescribed hour. He tells, in his "Confessions," that at the moment when the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given he "experienced a singular feeling of emotion at the thought of his own unworthiness in taking part in the ceremony." This emotion was nevertheless strong and sweet, and had "a most soothing effect." Each succeeding Friday he continued to take his friend's place as conductor, and always at the moment of the Benediction

* *Au Carmel Dieu seul et moi:* inscription engraved on the walls of Carmelite monasteries.

the same powerful unaccountable feeling took possession of him.

The month of May drew to a close, yet Hermann, utterly unable to account for the why and wherefore of his going, found himself assisting every Sunday at Mass at St. Valère. He felt, as it were, drawn towards some unknown ideal, and ardent aspirations surged within his soul. Before starting to give a concert at Ems, he made the acquaintance of the Abbé Legrand, who lent him Llomond's "Exposition of Christian Doctrine." At Ems he assisted at Mass on Sunday, and his own words best describe the marvels of Divine grace experienced within him. They are contained in a letter addressed to Father Marie Alphonse de Ratisbonne, whose wonderful and sudden conversion bears many points of resemblance to that of his correspondent. "Little by little, the chants, the prayers, the Presence—invisible, yet realized as a superhuman power—caused me to tremble with agitation—in short, it pleased God to dissolve me with the full force of His Divine grace . . . with fervour I invoked the most powerful and merciful God to engrave for all eternity on my heart the indelible impression of His beauty, to give me a faith proof against all obstacles and to fill me with gratitude proportionate to the greatness of the grace with which He had saturated me. I no doubt experienced somewhat of the feelings of St. Augustine when he heard in his garden at Cassiacum the famous 'Tolle, lege'—a little also of what you, dear Father, must have felt in the Church of St. Andrew in Rome when on the 20th of January, 1843, our Blessed Lady appeared to you." Father Hermann proceeds to describe the wonderful contrition vouchsafed to him for his past sins, and how spontaneously, and as it were by intuition, he began to make to God a general confession. Humbled as he was to the dust, he nevertheless felt an indescribable calm, accompanied by a certainty of God's forgiveness in consideration of his true and heart-felt sorrow. "On quitting that church at Ems I felt myself already a Christian . . . . at least as much a Christian as it is possible to be, short of receiving Holy Baptism."

On his return to Paris all traces of the former Hermann disappeared one by one. He shut himself up in his room, studied the doctrines of Christianity, and eagerly prepared for baptism. His deep and earnest faith, so plainly given him as a miracle of grace, enabled him to follow all the Catholic practices with ease. "Morning and evening prayers, Holy Mass, Vespers and Benediction, abstinence, chastity—I attended and observed all with facility and delight."

The day of his baptism was fixed for the 28th of August, the feast of St. Augustine. It is interesting to note the influence which this great convert and doctor of the Church exerted over Hermann. The first time he went to the church of Notre Dame des Victoires in Paris, a sermon was being preached on the life of St. Augustine. The spot where he chanced to kneel faced an altar dedicated to this saint. His godmother, the Duchesse de Rauzan, selected the name Augustine for him in baptism; and most of the presents given to him in the shape of books after his conversion were works relating to, or written by, the great Bishop of Hippo. Hermann's devotion to his patron saint continued unremittingly until his death.

Dating from his baptism in the Chapel of Notre Dame de Sion, the young neophyte made rapid progress in the path of perfection. But the thorns of raillery and contempt over which he had to tread were pointed and sharp; the impediments in the shape of custom and habit, long and clinging; and the rocks of memory and seduction, steep and slippery to climb and conquer. His natural temperament was energetic, fiery, passionate and proud, all of which tendencies had been fanned into flame by the adulation of a world of flatterers. Yet so unflinchingly did he set his will to co-operate with the Divine grace bestowed upon him, that in after life it was said of him, by one of his companions in religion "He was possessed of all the virtues in a manner not only sublime but heroic." The testimony of the Mother Superior of the Visitation at Paray-le-Monial is in accord with the foregoing;

"it was easy to discern," she wrote, "the marvellous progress of that eminently saintly soul; perhaps it was his intense humility which struck us most. His holy personality and sweet expression of countenance were as salutary and beneficial to us as his sermons."

From the moment of his conversion, Hermann's most ardent wish was to bid an eternal farewell to the world and his greatest desire "to find a quiet cell in a monastery, there to consecrate myself without reserve to the service of God." But his heavy gambling debts debarred him from executing this cherished project as promptly as he could have wished. He therefore determined to earn sufficient money to repay his creditors, and for two years he worked steadily with that end in view. His position was not without considerable danger to his soul. Forced constantly to revisit the scenes of his stormy past, he consequently found himself at each step confronted with temptations and occasions of sin.

In his journal kept during that time of trial he reveals the secret of his strength Daily and sometimes constant prayer was his only safe-guard in peril. If an interval, long or short, intervened during his piano-lessons, he would either recite the rosary, make a short meditation, read from a spiritual book, or recall some of the advice of his confessor; often the hour of midnight had struck before he took his well earned rest. His rosary wound round his arm, he would fall asleep—his last thoughts being of Jesus and Mary. The Blessed Sacrament was his most precious mainstay. Not a day passed without his hearing Mass, going to Holy Communion, or making several visits to the Blessed Sacrament as he passed the various churches on his way. Previous to his first communion, made on the Feast of the Nativity following his baptism, God on three different occasions gave him the singular privilege of experiencing the Presence of our Lord in his heart at the time when the faithful communicated at Mass. This extraordinary favour so indelibly impressed itself on his mind, that he constant-

ly alludes to it both in his writings and sermons. In the preface to his "Canticles of the Blessed Sacrament," he exclaims: "O my Jesus, am I not constrained to unite my harmonies to the chants and hymns of Paris—was it not in this great city that, still hidden under the sacramental veils, Thou didst unveil for me the Eternal Truth? And the first mystery Thou deigned to teach me, was it not Thy Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament? Jew as I still was, did I not long to approach Thy altar rails and to receive Thee into my heart? How is it possible to express the greatness of Thy condescension to me during that time of hope deferred—*Secretum meum mihi!*"

Towards the close of the year 1848, Hermann established his great work of the Nocturnal Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. One afternoon in November he entered the church of the Carmelite nuns in Paris, where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed. Lost in adoration, he failed to notice that the evening was drawing to a close and the night setting in. A lay sister gave the signal for strangers to quit the chapel, previous to closing its doors. Hermann addressed her and said, "I will leave at the same time as those ladies who are kneeling at the end of the church." "Ah," replied the Sister, "but they are allowed to remain here until the morning." The "Convert of the Eucharist" as Hermann loved to call himself, then and there hastened to M. de la Bouillérie, at that time Vicar-General of Paris. "I have just been turned out of a chapel where women watch all night before the Blessed Sacrament." "Find some men," rejoined M. de la Bouillérie, "and I give you permission to imitate these pious women whose holy office inspires you with envy."

Without loss of time Hermann set himself to work to find amongst his Catholic friends some generous-hearted enough to help him found the confraternity. By the 22nd November he had gathered together nineteen members, and M. de la Bouillérie presided over, blessed, and inaugurated the new Association.

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Thus, in the little sitting-room of the newly converted musician, sprang into existence the Association of Nocturnal Adoration, now spread over more than fifty dioceses in France and which flourishes to an almost equal extent in Spain, Germany, and Belgium. Besides its founder and president, two naval officers and a number of employés and working men constituted its initial members. The first nights were spent in adoration at the venerable sanctuary of Notre Dame des Victoires, and a marble tablet in that church perpetuates the memory of the foundation.

Two years spent in working for the glory of God, alternately with his professional tasks, and Hermann found himself free from debt. One last concert had to be given to realize a small sum wanted to make up a deficit and he was at liberty to break the chains that held him to the world. A thunder of applause resounded through the concert hall as he finally left the platform. Had the audience guessed that it was their favourite's last appearance in public, their enthusiasm would have overleapt all bounds. In the anteroom the tired pianist held out his arms to the Marist father who had accompanied him. "Ah!" he exclaimed, "it is then at last over! With what joy and happiness I played my final chords, and made my farewell bow to the public for ever."

Ere many months had come and gone, the worldly career of the brilliant artist was extinguished under the coarse brown serge of the Carmelite monk—the applause of concert-rooms exchanged for the silence and solitude of a cell in Carmel.

What more fitting order could Father Hermann have chosen than that of Our Lady of Mount Carmel—an Order intimately allied with the Old Law and the New, tracing its origin from the hermits who lived on the holy mountain in the time of the prophet Elias, and boasting of the first sanctuary erected shortly after Our Lady's death in her honour? Hermann was born a child of the Old Law: his regeneration had taken place under the New. In our Lady's month had occurred his singular conversion. Assiduous study of the works

of St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross helped to fix his choice. On the 7th October, 1850, after the usual novitiate, and under the title of Father Marie-Augustin of the Blessed Sacrament, Hermann made his religious profession.

The General of the Carmelites was not slow to avail himself of the zeal and energy of the young Carmelite, and the foundations of the monasteries of Lyons, Bagnères de Bigorre, Carcassonne, and many others, owed much to his strenuous efforts. His labours were indeed unremitting. Neither obstacles nor apparent failure could discourage him; no amount of responsibility frightened him; neither did weariness or fatigue avail to prostrate him. There seemed no limit to the quantity of work he would undertake. He preached in all the principal towns of France and the conversions he made were numerous and wonderful. His previous brilliant renown, his extraordinary and sudden conversion, the numberless influential friends he had left behind him, all contributed powerfully to throw the Order which he had entered into strong relief. Many new novices joined the Carmelites attracted by his fame. Money flowed in as the result of his preaching and contributed materially to the building of new monasteries and foundations. The Order of Mount Carmel flourished and grew apace.

Schemes for the continual spread of the Association of Nocturnal Adoration were never absent from Father Hermann's mind. Like a beautiful haunting melody, his love of the Blessed Sacrament accompanied him wheresoever he went. It became the harmonic undertone of his life. It formed the keynote of his sermons and discourses. The full diapason of his glowing love vibrated in his impassioned addresses, and found echoes in the hearts of his hearers. Consequently, he had the satisfaction of seeing the Association of Nocturnal Adoration firmly established in every town which he visited, and where he made a point of preaching on this incomparably beautiful devotion. His first sermon after his ordination was on the Holy Eucharist.

The same subject inspired him four years later, when in the pulpit of St. Sulpice he preached to a vast multitude assembled to hear him for the first time in Paris.

To the enormous crowd, gathered together from all parts of the French city, and presided over by the Archbishop of Paris, Hermann began by humbly and simply relating a few of the details of his past conversion. Turning to the groups of young men round the pulpit, he reminded them that he had lived their life and shared their pleasures. His voice gaining in earnestness and power, he painted in graphic words his feverish search for happiness; his vain endeavours to grasp it amid all that was offered him along the paths of glory and renown; the mirage that wavered alluringly and despairingly before his wearied and bewildered eyes; the aching void left in his heart by the constant succession of unrealized illusions. He then went on to explain what constitutes real happiness and in stirring accents invited his auditors to share his new found joy. "God alone can satisfy the cravings of the heart of man." And the words sounded like an echo of those of St. Augustine, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are not at rest till they rest in Thee." In metaphorical language Father Hermann proceeded to describe the state of his soul previous to his baptism. He related how he found himself one night walking amongst high precipitous mountains. A furious storm broke over his head, and in the great darkness he could only grope with difficulty along the side of a steep declivity. Flashes of lightning showed him at his feet a frightful and yawning abyss. A fall seemed inevitable. Suddenly a trail of light illuminated the surface of a neighbouring rock as he espied amid the granite a little golden door. . . . "My courage revived. . . . Breathlessly I dragged myself across briars and brambles, and arrived tattered, torn, and weary in front of the shining portal at which I knocked and at the same time called for assistance. Immediately there appeared on the threshold One resplendent in the beauty of immortal

youth, with an expression of radiant majesty on His wonderful countenance. He took me by the hand and led me within. Instantly the noise of the tempest was hushed to my ears; an ineffable calm descended upon my soul. I felt the soothing touch of a gentle hand leading me on and divesting me of my soiled garments. A delicious bath then restored me to health and strength. This bath not only cleansed me from all the stains with which I had been covered, but it healed all my wounds, infused new life into my veins, restored me my lost youth, at the same time exhaling such an exquisite perfume, that I longed to acquaint myself with its wonderful properties. . . ." He then tells of the banquet of bread and wine set before him—dwells on its marvellous restoring powers—narrates his vision of his host seated on a throne adored by angels, seraphim and cherubim—describes the voice like unto a celestial harmony which spoke to him in accents of purest music and which caused him to shed tears of love and sorrow. . . . . Finally he entreats his benefactor to tell him his name, in order that in unison with the angels, he may bless it all the days of his life. "And he answered me: 'I am called Love, I am the Eucharist, My Name is JESUS!'"

Such sermons were of frequent occurrence, and strongly influenced those who listened to them.

In the midst of a life of active work in the service of God, lived in obedience to the commands of his superiors, spent in giving retreats, Lenten courses, charity sermons, hearing confessions in English, Spanish, German, French, and Italian, baptizing Jews, and converting heretics, Father Hermann often experienced in his inmost soul a longing for solitude and the contemplative life. The foundation of the Holy Desert of Tarasteix was therefore a work quite in accord with his own heart.

The Carmelite sons of St. Teresa are divided into three branches: those who are sent as missionaries to foreign countries; those who in the different monasteries of the Order unite the active with the contem-

plative life; and thirdly those who, quite apart from the world, live the life of the primitive hermits. The same rule and constitutions are observed by the three branches; they constitute one family and all obey the same General. But the Holy Desert has its additional special rules. While their active brethren are combating in the world by giving missions, preaching and hearing confessions, the modern hermits, following as much as possible the example of those of old, guard and retain, as it were, the essence of the Rule of Mount Carmel as conceived by its early founders, the descendants of Elias and Eliseus. Thus they perpetuate the primitive spirit of the Order—the spirit of solitude, silence, contemplation, and prayer. The Holy Deserts also offer a retreat to the aged monks worn out and weary by incessant labour for the good of souls, who before making their last journey, find in these quiet homes time to prepare their own souls sweetly and peacefully for death. Again, those in the full course of their apostolic labours find in the Holy Desert, a halting-place where they can gain fresh health and strength, morally and physically, and return to their crusades braced and invigorated. With his usual energy Father Hermann devoted himself to the foundation of the Holy Desert of Tarasteix. The monastery stands a few miles from Tarbes, in the neighbourhood of Lourdes. Father Hermann gave the fortune which he inherited from his father towards the expenses of this foundation and the proceeds of the sale of his "Canticles of the Blessed Sacrament" are still devoted to the same purpose. The peace and quiet of the contemplative life was not yet to be the portion of the servant of God. Later we shall find him in the solitude of his beloved Desert, but he had yet much work to accomplish, not the least of which was that of his apostleship in England.

The year 1862 found him in Rome for the great festival of the canonization of the Japanese Martyrs. Cardinal Wiseman was in the Eternal City at the same time and for the same purpose. He there made the acquaintance

of Father Hermann, and, much struck by his holiness and zeal, expressed a wish to attach him to the Westminster diocese. For this purpose he addressed himself to the General of the Carmelites and pressed forward his urgent wish of re-establishing the Order of Mount Carmel in England. His request however was courteously refused; the help of the holy "Convert of the Eucharist" was still considered of paramount necessity in France, in the midst of the houses he had so recently founded. The Cardinal, far from being discouraged by this refusal, betook himself to the Holy Father. He urged such cogent reasons in favour of his desire, that he gained the intervention of the Pope in the matter. The General finally gave his assent, and the departure of Father Hermann for London was decided upon. Before leaving Rome he obtained an audience of Pius IX. who blessed him, saying, "I send you, my son, to convert the English, in the same way as, in the fifth century, one of my predecessors blessed and sent the monk Augustine, who was the first apostle to that country."

The sacrifice demanded of him was very great. The tender-hearted friar felt keenly the separation from his brethren in religion, from his many penitents, and from the country of his adoption. Asceticism and self-abnegation do not necessarily harden the heart, and the good Father, outwardly so calm and resigned, suffered inwardly all the more acutely. He passed through Paris on the 5th of August, and in order to defray the expenses of his journey, made a round of begging visits to his friends in that city.

Heretofore he had visited our great metropolis in the height of his artistic career and renown. He had then given several concerts and made a great deal of money. He now arrived unknown and uncared for, except by the good nuns of the Assumption, who received and lodged him in their house in Kensington. There were no friends and acquaintances to meet him, no success awaited him except what might be gained by hard renunciation and by the sacrifice of his own time and

health in the service of others. The constraint demanded by custom in England, in forbidding the monastic habit to the public gaze, was very irksome to him. He writes to his sister: "I cannot leave the house without having to exchange my Carmelite habit for a long black coat, a stiff white collar, and black cravat. This wretched collar imprisons my neck, my head, my thoughts, my heart; I feel half alive. But after all, is not the life of the cloister one of continual sacrifice? So what matters a little extra mortification, when it is a question of being able to render assistance to Catholics of all nations scattered over the immense city of London and often situated, some of them, far from all religious succour?"

The arrival of the zealous friar in London soon began to be bruited about. There were many who remembered his former concerts, and who talked about them and commented on his wonderful conversion. English curiosity is easily aroused, and English interest often quickly won. Father Hermann preached in the little chapel belonging to the nuns, and people came to hear him. At first curiosity led them to him, then, drawn by the irresistible fascination of the preacher, they returned again and again. Though not a great orator, Father Hermann nevertheless exerted a marvellous influence over his hearers His absolute simplicity and entire forgetfulnes of self, the warmth of his heartfelt words, and above all the sympathetic power of his appeals to the hearts of his listeners, rendered his sermons in many respects unlike any others and gained for him a success disproportionate to that of more academical and literary preachers. The good Father received many visits, which were followed by subscriptions towards the new foundation.

Finally, on the 15th of October, the Feast of St. Teresa, the Order of Mount Carmel was re-established in England. Father Hermann as Prior said Mass in the little chapel of a house belonging to the nuns of the Assumption, and with him were several friars arrived from the Continent, one of whom, Father Sebastian

Colin, still lives and works in the Westminster diocese. In the evening Cardinal Wiseman came to sanction the new foundation by his words and presence. It was placed under the protection of St. Simon Stock—"for was it not near London," wrote Father Hermann, "that Mary Immaculate gave the scapular to St. Simon Stock? Dating from that time she has, as it were, pledged herself to this land of England."

The Prior alone spoke English, so on him devolved most of the work connected with the little Priory. The Cardinal had placed in his hands the charge of all the Eucharistic Associations in London; he also named him examiner of the clergy and desired him to preach ecclesiastical retreats. Apropos of the first of these charges, he wrote to his sister, "anything and everything which gives me the opportunity of occupying myself about the Blessed Eucharist is dear to me, and the Cardinal has rightly divined the special attraction of my soul." On the 6th of August, 1863, the anniversary of his arrival in England, Father Hermann established the Nocturnal Adoration in England. He wrote to one of his friends, "A Confraternity of the Nocturnal Adoration is started in London. We have just passed a night before the Blessed Sacrament exposed in our chapel in Kensington, I am exceedingly rejoiced and I hope the Association in Paris will give thanks to our Lord for this success."

Aided by the enthusiastic zeal of its Founder, the new Confraternity enjoyed a short span of life. Speaking at the Eucharistic Congress at Malines, Father Hermann said: "The Nocturnal Adoration for men is now established in London, and takes place several times in each month throughout the year. These holy nights, in which a goodly number of converts pray before the Divine Eucharist for the conversion of their brethren, are observed with an edifying fervour which could hardly be surpassed. . . . It meets, however, with serious obstacles in the character, habits and ideas of a people, who are essentially lovers of the comfortable (*amateurs du confortable*), and among whom a certain rigour in the

observance of social inequalities, renders any fusion of the different classes of society extremely difficult." The Association is still kept up by the Carmelite Fathers in Kensington. The Nocturnal Adoration begins at 10 p.m. every Wednesday and terminates with holy Mass at 6 o'clock the following morning. Every Wednesday in the Carmelite Church, in Kensington, the Blessed Sacrament is raised aloft and exposed in the silent watches of the night. A succession of white cloaked friars keep up uninterruptedly the hours of intercession and adoration. At midnight their solemn office of Matins and Lauds accentuates the prevailing solemnity.

The strong tide of sin and suffering is still around us, as in the days when Father Hermann's love and zeal established this much needed means of propitiation in our midst. Faith has become stronger, and Catholics have greatly increased in numbers, nevertheless no watchers present themselves to intercede for the millions who nightly, in this great Babylon of ours, are tossed and buffeted on the deep seas of temptation and vice. Every Wednesday night the calm and hush of Tabor is for those who would taste of its delights. Yet for many a long year the laity have discontinued taking any part in this exquisite and beautiful devotion, and vacant prie-dieus tell a silent tale of laxity and desertion.

In a year from the time of the London foundation, the number of Carmelites having considerably augmented, the house in Kensington Square became too small for their accommodation, and the necessity of finding a more commodious building made itself urgently felt. Father Hermann bethought himself of a house in Church Street surrounded by a large garden, in which he had already planned in imagination the foundations of a new church. The owner, an octogenarian of the name of Bird, was known to have strong prejudices against Catholics and their religion. Undaunted by this knowledge, Father Hermann called on Mr. Bird and proposed to rent his house and establish therein his friars. The good Father, by his gay and amiable

manner, so charmed the old Protestant gentleman, that he there and then abandoned his prejudices and willingly entered into the arrangements for the letting of his house. The building was quickly transformed into a friary, and on St. Teresa's day the friars took possession of their new abode.

The Fathers became more and more esteemed, and Catholics lost no time in helping them with money and provisions. Many delighted in sending regularly the necessary repasts, ready prepared for each day. All this aroused a great deal of sectarian hatred, and the Fathers had to endure their share of persecution and contempt. Circumstances, however, shortly arose which placed their charity and devotion in strong relief, and enabled them to appear in public with all the signs of their holy religion.

Five young sailors, natives of the Philippine islands, had been condemned to be hanged at the Old Bailey for piracy and murder. Father Hermann, who spoke Spanish fluently, and the novice-master, who was a Spaniard, obtained permission from the Governor of Newgate to spend some hours daily with the prisoners. The gentle, loving sympathy extended to them by the two Carmelites worked its way through their rough exterior, and in the fortnight intervening between their sentence and its execution these wolves were turned into lambs. Father Hermann preferred his request to the authorities to be allowed to administer Holy Communion to the prisoners, and the request was complied with.

The greater part of the night preceding the execution was spent by four of the condemned in prayer at the foot of a crucifix, and before dawn broke the Carmelite Fathers were in the prison to give them the Holy Viaticum and to spend the remaining hours admonishing and encouraging the penitent sinners. "Never," related Father Hermann, "during the thirteen years that I had been a priest, had I so strongly experienced the power and efficacy of the Blessed Eucharist and the priesthood."

To the astonishment of the thirty thousand spectators

the condemned men were escorted to the scaffold by three Carmelite priests. Leave having been previously courteously given by the prison authorities, the cross, rosary and scapular were worn visibly by each prisoner, but no hostile murmur arose On the appearance of the Fathers by the side of their penitents, the cry of "hats off," ran through the crowd and every head was quickly uncovered. The friars pressed round the prisoners and held before them the crucifix which they kissed, reciting aloud the acts of faith, hope and charity and contrition, and invoking the names of Jesus and Mary. The gaping crowd was much impressed by the devotion shown by the three Catholic priests and the precaution taken of ordering two police officers to escort them home proved unnecessary. On all sides, signs of deep respect were manifested. But in the sequel to this quintuple execution, the marvellous power of the Catholic faith is most markedly shown. Father Hermann relates it thus—"The *Times* newspaper observed that, when the corpses were inspected in the afternoon, it was noticed with surprise that, contrary to the effects produced by this manner of death, the faces of four of the men had undergone no alteration, but were calm and composed, 'as if in a gentle sleep,' while the fifth was hardly to be recognized from the fearful contortions caused by the last agony. The same journal gives the name of this unfortunate man. He alone was not a Catholic. The Blessed Eucharist had left its stamp upon the rest. This Divine Sacrament, while preserving their souls to eternal life, had also preserved their countenances, the mirrors of their souls, from distortion . . . . Forty years ago no priest would have been able to reach them: no man under sentence of death could have been fortified with the 'Bread of the Strong,' the 'Bread which came down from Heaven;' nor at that time, would the London populace have endured the sight of a Catholic priest by the side of a convict on the scaffold of the Old Bailey."

Father Hermann made the execution of the Spanish

sailors the subject of an address at the Eucharistic Assembly at Malines in 1864. *L'Independance Belge*, a Freemason journal, took occasion to use it as a text for an abusive article, abounding in ridicule and calumny against the artist-monk. This article was immediately reproduced by the *Times*. Just at this time Mr. Bird was considering whether his prejudices would or would not interfere with his wish of selling his house outright to the friars, and thus allowing it to become a Catholic institution. The *Times* article happening to fall under his notice, produced upon him a very different effect from what the writer could have intended. "The man who can excite such enmity," he reflected, "must be possessed of a vast deal of intrinsic worth," and he sent across the street for Father Hermann. "Ha, ha, Father," exclaimed the old man smiling and holding out the newspaper, "fine things are here said about you!" Then motioning the friar to a chair and adding a few kindly words, he continued, "I sent for you to-day because I am in a greater hurry now to sell you my house than perhaps you are to buy it. Not that I am in want of money; my children will have plenty, thank God; but what I read in this newspaper has so well disposed me in your favour, that I want to enter into negotiations and terminate this business with you at once. Who knows? Later I might not be of the same mind."

Father Hermann did not need telling twice. The deed of purchase was drawn up and signed and the religious thus became proprietors of the house and large garden. The beautiful gothic church, now so well known to the inhabitants of Kensington and its neighbourhood, was shortly begun; and Father Hermann wrote on the 13th August, 1866, to his sister, "Our festivities for the inauguration have been splendid, very consoling, and well attended. We have a beautiful church, an excellent organ by Cavaillé, and—plenty of debts: but these are the affair of our Father, St. Joseph." During the three years of his office as Prior in London, Father Hermann devoted himself heart and soul to

furthering the cause of our holy religion. The Association of Thanksgiving was established, the procession of the Scapular drew together a number of the faithful every month, and at the request of the Cardinal an Association was founded on behalf of the Souls in Purgatory. At the same time continual journeys were undertaken for the purpose of giving missions in Ireland, Scotland, France, Belgium, and Prussia and yet none of the works undertaken in England were allowed to suffer. Referring to this constant travelling Father Hermann once remarked, "In spite of my conversion I am always the Wandering Jew!" He was asked one day at a railway station: "But, Father, where is your place of residence?" "In the railway carriage!" he replied, with a half smile and a smothered sigh at having to lead such an agitated life.

At the completion of his term of years as Prior he left London for much needed rest at Broussey and from there he was sent to the Holy Desert of Tarasteix. It proved his last halt on earth. In the midst of beautiful scenes, surrounded by fresh woods and valleys, the songs of birds and the murmurs of running waters he tasted of the silent and solitary life he had so long craved for. "I long for the Holy Desert," he had written to his nephew; "I look forward to it as to an anteroom of Heaven." "Never," he wrote in October, 1869, "have I so clearly realized the attraction of the contemplative life. In spite of my expansive nature, which has hitherto required a continual activity, I taste a most ineffable peace in this sweet retreat where Jesus has allowed me to repose myself." Ere three years had past, he had traversed the anteroom and entered on the Great Rest beyond.

Father Hermann's temperament was at all times more suited to the active than to the contemplative life, and Divine Providence seemingly had chosen him for the apostleship of souls in total opposition to his own aspirations towards the hidden life of the cloister. In the early days of the foundation of Tarasteix, the saintly Curé d'Ars had written to him these prophetic

words: "You do well to work at the foundation of a desert, but you will not derive much profit from it for yourself." It was in the designs of God that he should lay down his life for the salvation of souls redeemed by the Precious Blood; and in order that the victim might be made worthy of the sacrifice God called him for a time to the foot of the Tabernacle, in order that he might purify himself and so unite his soul more and more with the Victim of Love on the altar.

In 1870, Father Hermann was once again called to the active life. The war broke out between France and Germany. Many of the Carmelite houses in the south of France were besieged and pillaged, and their inmates ejected with violence. Fearing his nationality being made a pretext of revolutionary hate and spite and dreading the consequences to his brethern of his residence among them, he obtained permission from his superiors to give up his post as master of novices at Broussey and quit the country. He accordingly made a retreat at Tarasteix, visited the foundations of Bagnères and Carcassonne, played the organ there for the last time, and left for Geneva, where Monsignor Mermillod received him with the greatest cordiality. In obedience to the desires of this prelate, he finally took up his abode at Spandau, in Prussia, among the French prisoners detained there and deprived of religious succour. The German authorities had forbidden the ministrations of the French clergy amongst their imprisoned compatriots. Mgr. Mermillod bethought himself that Father Hermann, by reason of his Teutonic birth, his missions in Berlin, and his former relations with the court of Prussia, might be perhaps welcomed by the Prussian Government. His prevision proved correct. On the 24th November, the feast of St. John of the Cross, having first applied for the blessing of his superior-general on his new mission, the holy Carmelite left Switzerland for Spandau with these prophetic words on his lips: "Germany will be my grave."

He found the poor French soldiers living in the

greatest misery. He spoke to them of their country, exhorted them to bear patiently their sufferings and to offer them to God for the salvation of their nation. He talked to them of their own souls, of the necessity of their making their peace with God; and told them he had come amongst them to help them in all their wants; to give them love and comfort as to his own brethren. He exhorted them to come to the presbytery and there in all simplicity to tell him their sorrows and desires. On the 12th December, he wrote to his sister-in-law: "The prisoners are beginning to come to confession; this evening eight came to me for that purpose. It seems always our Divine Master's pleasure to give me a certain amount of success in my work. Never before have I been placed in the midst of such a vast field of souls to be gained for Jesus." On the 22nd December, he again relates his occupations and his joys: "The prisoners besiege me from eight in the morning until evening . . . . They have permission to come to the presbytery. They either come for spiritual advice or to enlist my sympathy in their sufferings which are very great. They return me all the love I lavish on them . . . . We have now on an average fifty soldiers a day for confession and Communion."

The church was badly warmed and consequently very cold, and the long hours spent in the confessional told severely on the good Father. Much of his time was also spent among the sick, most of whom were suffering from small-pox. On the 8th January, he went to Berlin, to spend a sum of £80 which had been sent him in purchases for his prisoners. The following words of a friend who met him in that city and who was a witness of his last days will be of interest to readers of this little sketch of his life: "In the evening, I was, together with several others, in the little sitting room of the presbytery of St. Hedwige, which was always placed at Father Hermann's disposal when he visited Berlin. While he was engaged in conversation with those around him, I narrowly observed his physiognomy and an attentive scrutiny convinced me that he was nearing

the end of his laborious career. I noted his calm yet pale face, his fatigued yet serene expression. In imagination I seemed to see an aureole hovering over his head. I mentally compared the impression with which he inspired me, to a glorious sunset at the close of a perfect day. Knowing how evanescent are its colours one lingers to watch their beauty as they fade away. . . . On Friday, 13th January, his eldest brother came for me to accompany him to Spandau. Father Hermann was ill: at his side we found a nursing sister. 'Well, Father,' he said, 'I have caught the small-pox, and I want you to take my place with the prisoners during my illness.' I answered him that I hoped it would please God, soon to restore him to health for the sake of the souls under his care. His eyes fixed on the crucifix, he calmly replied, 'Well, no! this time I hope God will take me.' In the evening the fever had increased and delirium had set in."

On the 15th January the parish priest of Spandau gave him the last sacraments. He renewed his vows and in spite of his sufferings intoned the Te Deum, the Magnificat, the Salve Regina and the De Profundis. He then kept his eyes fixed in the direction of the church, as if to unite himself more and more to Jesus in the Blessed Eucharist.

He asked to see his brothers, all of whom had followed his example and joined the Catholic Church. They arrived unfortunately too late to receive his last breath. On the evening of the 19th the nursing sister asked him if he would like to see his confessor. "I am then about to die," he said: "God's Holy Will be done! It is best so—for were I to get well I should yet see many sorrowful things—but, still I would have liked to have worked a little more and gained souls for Jesus." He made his confession and with the utmost fervour received the Holy Viaticum at 9 o'clock for the last time. At eleven his two nurses (a Jesuit lay-brother and a Sister of Charity), asked him for his blessing. He tried to raise himself so as to perform the pious act with greater

dignity and stretching out his arms he slowly and reverently pronounced the words of blessing. Fatigued with the exertion he fell back, murmuring, "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit!" They were his last words

Calmly and peacefully he awaited his end. At ten o'clock on the following morning the devoted servant of God gently breathed his last. His body lies buried in the Church of St. Hedwige, Berlin, where he had so often lifted his voice in praise of his Divine Lord and Master in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

Born with all the gifts of nature that constitute the making of a great artist, Hermann Cohen became by the help of the gift of God's grace, a good and holy religious. His strong artistic temperament, keenly susceptible to impressions of all kinds, had, so to speak, merged the æsthetic craving for beauty common to all artists, into one supernal admiration and longing for the source of all created and uncreated beauty. It is a well known fact that of all types of humanity, those who are possessed of the artistic disposition are the most insatiate for sympathy. The greater the artist and the more powerful his ideas, emotions, and feelings, the stronger will be his desire to communicate the thoughts which have stirred him to others. Hence the chef-d'oeuvres of painting, sculpture, music and literature, are the outcome of their creators instructive desire to convey in outward form and to share with others the impressions which become too heavy to carry alone.

Father Hermann was possessed of a large amount of sympathetic impulse and when once the divine art of holiness was made manifest to him he longed with all the strength of his enthusiastic nature to impart to others the circumstances, impressions and convictions which had so strongly stirred his soul. "I have often heard him say," said one who had known him for many years, "that to save a soul he would go to the other end of the world, even if he knew that he should have to die there. And, in fact," adds the same person, "so

that he could benefit a soul, nothing seemed to cost him anything, neither sickness, trouble, journeys, nor fatigue of any kind; nothing stopped him, if he thought that he could soothe pain, console sorrow, or get an opportunity of making God a little more loved."

It is impossible to convey any adequate idea of Father Hermann's great love for the Holy Eucharist. His zeal and devotion won him the titles of Apostle of the Eucharist, Angel of the Tabernacle. "I only know one more beautiful day than that of one's First Communion," he wrote to a young girl: "It is that of one's Second Communion: and so on for the rest."

"I would fain," he said, a few months before his death, "communicate every hour of my life: there is no happiness like this."

The effects of Father Hermann's love and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament may be likened to a succession of beautiful overtones resulting from one perfect chord, ascending one above the other until they are lost to the listening ear. The Association of Nocturnal Adoration and the Confraternity of Thanksgiving are rich in endless adumbrations of prayer and praise, the gentle vibrations of which are carried far beyond human ken upwards through choirs of angels, to the throne of God. Father Hermann had a tender and filial devotion to the Blessed Virgin. "Jesus and Mary!" he exclaimed at the opening of a course of sermons for the month of Mary:—"Jesus and Mary have drawn me to them. Mary led me to Jesus; Mary who gave me Jesus. To her I am indebted for the Blessed Eucharist and the Eucharist has robbed me of my heart, and thrown over me a spell so potent that I have ever since desired only to live for Jesus and Mary. I have given myself to Jesus in the order of Mary and am the monk of Mary and the priest of Jesus."

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These words of the distinguished French writer, Louis Veuillot, sum up the general admiration evinced on all sides for this noble and sainted life. They are reprinted from the *Univers*. "Our old and dear friend

the venerated Father Augustin-Marie of the Blessed Sacrament, Discalced Carmelite, died last month at Spandau. A convert from Judaism, not content with conversion only, he took orders and embraced the monastic life. The world remembered and continued to call him by the name which his musical talent had rendered famous—that of Hermann. He was always a good and holy religious, ascetic, gentle, earnest in the strict observance of his severe rule. He went about barefoot, collecting alms, exhorting, preaching, founding monasteries; obedient in his ardour, humble in his success.

"He died at Spandau, whither he had been sent to organize religious succour for the relief of the French prisoners. His self-abnegation was thorough in all he undertook; the work therefore succeeded, but at the cost of his life. The letter which briefly apprised us of his apostolic end also acquainted us of the fact, that he had been unable to resist the ill-effects of overwork and that those around him had been powerless to induce him to take other rest than the repose of death, which God finally sent him as his reward. Having become what he was by the grace of God, it was meet that Hermann should die thus."